

WISTAS

A publication of Allegheny Land Trust

Fall 2004

From the President

When I learned of Kelly and Brian's decision to make a contribution to Allegheny Land Trust in lieu of wedding favors for their guests, it reminded me why I dedicate my time, donate my money, and serve on the Board of Directors for ALT. When the couple was asked what encouraged their gift, Kelly explained, "We try to live our lives in accordance with our deep respect for the natural world and thought that our wedding day should be no different."

Kelly's explanation prompted me to question why land conservation is so important. Do we fear the loss of special places close to home? Are we upset when the natural landscape is transformed into more structures and parking lots...when existing buildings and parking lots lie abandoned nearby? For me, land conservation is about joy. The joy of knowing that my children, and theirs, will grow up in a community where the beauty and wonders of nature are plentiful.

It is hard to think ahead generations in this fast-paced world of email, overnight delivery, and immediate gratification. But who has not experienced the power – and flood of memories – when visiting a special place that remains unchanged after 5, 10, or even 20 years? That is the power of land conservation.

Thanks to the foresight, vision and support of Kelley, Brian and you, Allegheny Land Trust has protected 1,200 acres of green space and countless memories that will remain for today, tomorrow, and forever. That is the power of land conservation. That is the power of your support.

Thank you.
Steve Schott, President

"I Do" ... Support Allegheny Land Trust

Couple donates to Trust in lieu of wedding favors

When Kelly and Brian Sabom were planning their wedding, they wanted to create as little waste and be as environmentally friendly as possible. Looking at the fancy trinkets traditionally given to guests as

favors made them cringe because such trinkets inevitably end up in a landfill. So in lieu of favors, they chose to donate the money they would have spent on favors to the Allegheny Land Trust.

At the wedding reception, each table included a tent card explaining the donation and a short description of Allegheny Land Trust. This turned out to be a big hit with the guests, who appreciated the personal nature of the donation.

Although they now live in California, Kelly and Brian grew up in the North Hills of Pittsburgh and wanted to give back to the area that had fostered their love of nature and interest in

environmental issues. They chose to support a land trust because they believe it is one of the more effective ways to support conservation efforts.

Kelly said her mother, Sally Swegan, suggested donating to a land trust after attending an environmental education workshop. Allegheny Land Trust was a natural choice because of our operations in the North Hills.



In lieu of wedding favors, Kelly and Brian Sabom made a donation on their guests' behalf to the Allegheny Land Trust.



Moving ahead on the Abandoned Mine Drainage treatment system

The Allegheny Land Trust Board of Directors recently decided to move forward to establish a partnership with W. PA Conservancy and Hedin Environmental which will address the abandoned mine drainage (AMD) problem at Allegheny Land Trust's 80-acre Wingfield Pines property in Upper St. Clair. Currently, 2,000 gallons per minute of mine water carrying 43 tons of iron oxide per year impact Chartiers Creek.

This partnership brings together the necessary expertise to raise funds to construct and operate a system of shallow ponds and wetlands that are designed to filter out the non-toxic iron oxide. Western PA Conservancy's Watershed Assistance Center Director Nick Pinozotto will lead the fundraising for the estimated \$700,000 needed to construct the system. Potential sources for construction funds include state and federal grants. Once funding is secured, Nick and Bob Hedin, the system's designer, will work together to manage the construction.

Finally, Bob Hedin will operate and maintain the System. "Hedin Environmental has designed the system to concentrate iron oxide accumulation in five ponds," explains Bob Hedin. "The ponds are designed to prevent 'contamination' of the sludge with sediment. Hedin has recently found a market for clean iron oxide sludge and plans to recover the material from the Wingfield Pines system every 7 to 10 years.



The proposed iron recovery system will remove more than 90% of the iron oxide currently being discharged into Chartiers Creek. It's designed to be aesthetically interesting with a strong central feature of pie-shaped ponds separated by trails and an "island" in the center that could accommodate a viewing platform so visitors can see the improving water quality (from bright orange to clear) from a single vantage point.

In return for recovery rights to the iron sludge, Hedin will provide routine inspection of the system and ensure that it is functioning as intended.

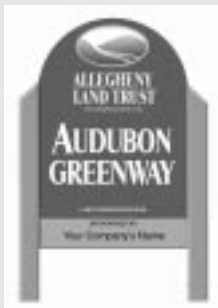
The potential to collaborate with the Regional Environmental Educational Center, that is being developed adjacent to Wingfield Pines by Upper St. Clair, has influenced the design of this treatment system, which will provide educational and aesthetic value in addition to functioning as a water purifier.

"We are very fortunate to have a couple of resident landscape

architects in Board members Ron Schipani and Brad Tiche as well as Allegheny Land Trust's Executive Director Roy Kraynyk," states President Steve Schott. "I think once completed, this project will be the "Go To" AMD treatment system for conference field trips and demonstrations".

The Home Depot signs on

The Home Depot is the latest sponsor to sign on to our Co-Sign for Conservation program. Other sponsors include Duquesne Light and Eat'n Park. Through this unique program, corporations can show their support for land conservation and their community and increase exposure in a tasteful, neighborhood-friendly way.



A sign like this promotes visibility of both the Allegheny Land Trust property and the company sponsorship. Please call us if you would like to support a local property and the conservation work of Allegheny Land Trust.

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What is a conservation easement?

A conservation easement is a tool by which land is conserved by a land trust while owned by someone else. An easement is a legal document that transfers certain rights to the easement holder, such as to a utility company to permit them to cross a property with a gas or power line.

In the case of a conservation easement, the landowner transfers rights to develop the land to a qualified easement holder, such as Allegheny Land Trust, which holds them in perpetuity.

Easements are growing in popularity as an effective and less expensive way to protect land. The benefits for the landowner include potentially reduced property taxes because they have reduced the value of the land they own by severing the development rights, and if donated, the value of the development rights, which are embodied in the easement, is a deductible contribution. Most importantly, the owner knows the land will remain forever natural.

Allegheny Land Trust has conservation easements on three parcels totaling about 150 acres. In one case, the land is occupied by a home, barn, stables, and fences and operates as a horse boarding business. The business can continue to operate and expand as necessary, but the farm cannot be converted into a housing plan.

Monitoring the land by visiting it at least annually is critical to ensure that the easement is being honored by the landowner. Since the easement runs with the land, future owners are more likely to need reminding about the fact that they cannot develop the land.

This is a summary of conservation easements. To learn more, give us a call and we'll send you a short pamphlet.



Allegheny Land Trust holds a conservation easement on a 100-acre farm in Washington County that operates as a boarding stable for racehorses.

Rain doesn't dampen enthusiasm for bluegrass and green space



Sewickley, PA, July 19, 2004 – Despite rainy weather, the 3rd annual Bluegrass for Green Space attracted 150 attendees and raised \$5000 for the Allegheny Land Trust and Fern Hollow Nature Center.

Children and adults danced barefoot to banjo plucking and guitar strumming complemented by the rhythm of the rain. Event-goers delighted in grilled gourmet goodies thanks to Allegheny Land Trust Board members Sue Gold, Steve Bland, Brad Tiche, Bob Bolding, and Lindsey Smith and State Representative Mark Mustio. Thanks also to Pat McShea for helping with set up and to the host of volunteers who kept a smile on their faces throughout the rainy day. "I'm really enjoying the evening filled with friends, good food, and great music. It's even better to be supporting two meaningful area nonprofit groups at the same time," said event-goer and lead sponsor Jim Edson of Bartlett Tree Experts. Other sponsors were T-Bones of Wexford, Dave's Music Mine, Ambridge Bike Shop, Moshannock Creek Fly Shop, and Sewickley Starbucks.

Former Department of Conservation and Natural Resources secretary, John C. Oliver III, presented Allegheny Land Trust's annual Community Conservationist Award to outgoing Allegheny Land Trust board member Thomas M. Schmidt for ten years of service on the board. Watch for an announcement on our website about Bluegrass for Green Space Volume III, a CD of the festival's music.

Allegheny Land Trust seeks ARAD funds for Regional Trail System

Allegheny Land Trust continues for the tenth year as the umbrella organization for the region's rail trail organizations and municipalities seeking ARAD (Allegheny Regional Asset District) funds. As part of that effort, an application was submitted on July 19 for a \$100,000 capital grant for trail projects sponsored by Montour Trail Council, Regional Trail Council, Rachel Carson Trail Association (formerly the Harmony Trail Association), the Steel Valley Trail Association, and the Panhandle Trail Association.

As part of the process, applicants must present their project to the ARAD Board. Each year we've enlisted well-known and knowledgeable personalities to represent our (Allegheny Land Trust and trail groups) constituent base and to do the presentation. These have included TV personality Wayne Van Dyne and County Councilman-at-Large David Fawcett. This year Jodi Klebick, President of PUMP (Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project) will speak about how the Regional Trail System attracts young professionals that employers would like to see in Pittsburgh.



Since 1995, Allegheny Land Trust has raised and administered \$1.7 million of ARAD funds for the development of 70 miles of the regional trail system in Allegheny County. Allegheny Land Trust provides this service to trail groups at no cost to them.

Want to Learn More?

.....Host an "ALTea"

Hosting an ALTea is a fun, simple, and powerful way for you to support land conservation. By inviting a half dozen or so friends and neighbors to a morning, afternoon, or evening tea you can introduce them to the good news and success of Allegheny Land Trust.



An Allegheny Land Trust staff or Board member will make a 30-minute presentation in your home or other location, answer any questions, and be on their way in an hour. Neither you nor your guests will be asked for money. But we hope everyone is intrigued enough to join our mailing list.

All you need to do is invite some friends, make some tea (or coffee), and let us do the rest. You'll feel proud as your friends hear about the success and see the beautiful pictures of the wonderful properties that you've helped protect by supporting Allegheny Land Trust.

You don't have to be a member. You can host an ALTea even if you're just curious and want to learn more about how and why Allegheny Land Trust has protected more than 1,200 acres.

For more information or to schedule an ALTea contact Michelle at 412-749-4882 or email at admin@alleghenylandtrust.org.

...Or become a Site Steward

Have you ever considered becoming more involved with land protection? If so, consider becoming an Allegheny Land Trust Site Steward to help monitor the land you have helped protect. You will be helping Allegheny Land Trust manage the land while enjoying the open space and beauty it provides you and your community.

You can now sign up for this fall's training course, which was designed by Lisa Smith, an Allegheny Land Trust Board Member and consulting ecologist. Sessions will include classroom and field work. Space is limited so give the office a call now if you are interested. Training will be offered on October 21 from 6:00 to 8:00pm and November 6 from 8:00am to 4:00pm. Please call for details – 412.749.4882

New board members

Allegheny Land Trust is very fortunate to have the following exceptionally talented people join the organization:

- Bob Bolding, Senior Market Research Manager, GlaxoSmithKline
- Sue Kalisz, Ecologist/Biologist, University of Pittsburgh
- Alan Miller, Attorney, Picadio, Sneath, Miller, & Norton, PC
- Steven Miller, Registered Consulting Arborist, Bartlett Tree Experts
- Ann Morrison, Senior Vice President, Citizens Bank of Pennsylvania
- David Myron, Vice President and Treasurer, RIDC
- B. Timothy Stanny, Attorney and former Vice Chairman Hampton Township Environmental Advisory Council

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**National Kodak American
Greenway Award Received**

ALT's proposal was one of only 40 selected from 234 applications from 47 states and the District of Columbia. The \$1,000 grant will fund aerial photography and mapping for the Stewardship Program.

To learn more see the press release on our website.

www.alleghenylandtrust.org

• Hikes on Allegheny Land Trust properties

events such as...

Check our website for upcoming

Upcoming events

Helping local people save local land



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