

Aiken Land Conservancy
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May 2011



JOIN US FOR DERBY DREAMIN'

Polo and Thoroughbred Racing Better Together!



Attention ALC Members – mark your calendar for Saturday, May 7th! You are invited to spend the afternoon enjoying an action-filled, high-goal polo match, followed by a fabulous Kentucky Derby party to cheer on your favorite – all while helping the Aiken Land Conservancy achieve our mission of protecting precious land in our area.

Thanks to the generous support of 302 Polo and Eqwine Bar & Grill, the Aiken Land Conservancy (ALC) is pleased to bring back one of its signature fundraisers, Derby Dreamin' – this time at the New Bridge Polo Club. The gates will open at 2 pm with the Equine Charities Cup polo match and tent party getting underway at 3 pm

where we will enjoy good food and libations. Following the trophy presentation and award ceremony, attention will turn to the multiple big screen tv's for the running of the Grade 1 Woodford Reserve Turf Classic followed closely by the 137th Running of the Kentucky Derby.

Tickets are on sale now and are \$65 per person for ALC Members and \$75 for Non-Members. Beer, wine, Mint Julep's and heavy hors 'deurves will be available throughout the afternoon as attendees mix with friends, new and old alike, compare derby day hats and of course, stomp divots, all for the important cause of protecting open space in Aiken County. Polo and Thoroughbred racing . . . certainly better together!

--- ✂ ---
Clip and mail this form to renew your membership with the Aiken Land Conservancy

JOIN THE AIKEN LAND CONSERVANCY AND HELP PRESERVE AIKEN'S GREAT SPACES

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Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

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- Levels of membership:
- | | | |
|--|---|--|
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Make checks payable to: Aiken Land Conservancy (ALC)
Make payments to: ALC, PO Box 3096, Aiken, SC 29802

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OUR 2011 DERBY DREAMIN' SPONSORS



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2010

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 Ms. Mary Guynn
 Mrs. Dorothy Herbruck
 Mr. and Mrs. Lisa Hosang
 Mr. and Mrs. Russell McKnight, Jr.
 Mr. George B. Rawls
 Mr. and Mrs. Paul Rideout
 Mr. David E. Scott
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 Dr. and Mrs. Bauer Vaughters
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 Mr. and Mrs. Rob Johnston
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 Mr. and Mrs. Bennett Tucker
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 Mrs. Elizabeth J. Witham
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 Mr. Gerald Blackwell
 Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Briggs
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2011

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 Ms. Lydia L. Rose – Aiken Saddlery & Supply
 Ms. Barbara G. Uskup

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 Mr. and Mrs. Mike McNeill
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 Ms. Anna Zouck
 Ms. Linda Donovan
 Mr. and Mrs. Loren D. Fair
 Mr. Thomas Coleman

“Thank You” to everyone who has joined or renewed their memberships with the Aiken Land Conservancy. ALC relies upon membership payments and donations to fund our mission of preserving Aiken's natural heritage.

ALC extends a special “Thank You” to Allegra Marketing, Print & Mail for the award of a 2011 FootPRINT grant, which is helping defray the cost of this newsletter.

Land Management...

(continued from page 8)

upon digging into the earth the white tendrils of the fungus could be seen affecting many more. Stro Morrison, a SC Registered Forester, advised us to clear the affected tract, sell the timber at the going market rate and replant next winter with the slightly more root rot resistant Longleaf Pine. There are a number of steps that must be undertaken before replanting can take place including treatment of the affected area to prevent future outbreaks along with controlled burning but in the end the ALC will be left with a much more vibrant, healthy and productive stand that should mature over the next 80 years.

Future articles will follow the steps taken to insure the vitality of the Thomas Tract as the ALC continues to insure the use of proper land management practices on all of its protected land.



A healthy stand – the long term goal!



Stro Morrison, Phil Richardson and Bennett Tucker discussing next steps

Executive Director's Report

Katie Roth

INSPIRED



That's what I feel after returning from the 2011 Southeast Land Conservation Conference in Chattanooga, Tennessee. On March 30-April 1, Meg Ferguson (the ALC's administrator) and I packed our bags and headed North with hopes that this event would prove to be a worthwhile experience. Well, it turned out to be that and more. Over 175 attendees from 12 Southeastern states came to learn, share, network and build new alliances and friendships. This was the 8th annual conference, put on by the Land Trust Alliance (www.lta.org), a national organization which helps build highly effective and well-governed land trusts that protect lands with the highest conservation values and ensure their protection in perpetuity.

Meg and I attended an all day Land Trust "Boot Camp". This three-part workshop, designed for those new to land trust board members and staff, focused on the basic elements necessary to ensure organizational strength, sound land transaction and lasting stewardship of protected lands. This was the "101" of our industry and it was helpful to get back to the basics. We also learned about all of the online resources and tools that are available to us. The next day, we attended other breakout sessions on building a strong board and a financial discussion on how land trusts are adapting in a down economy.

I took many notes, handouts, pamphlets, colleague business cards and booklets of information back to Aiken with me, but the most important thing I returned home with was a new sense of community among land trusts. This conference was a collection of passionate, like-minded individuals who know the importance of saving land. It was very motivating to spend a few days with a brain trust of folks who all strive for the same goals. We shared best practices, new tools and stories with other land trusts – some similar to our configuration and some different. I walked away knowing that building a strong network of partners in our region can only help strengthen what the ALC can accomplish right here in Aiken. We can do a lot on our own, but much more if we keep the bigger picture in mind.

I was also reminded that the work we do is permanent – and allows us to leave behind a natural legacy. Who can ask for more than that?

Goodbye Junk. Hello Relief!



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Aiken Land Conservancy

Preserving Aiken's natural heritage

The mission of the Aiken Land Conservancy is to preserve natural and historic resources through land conservation.

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Aiken Land Conservancy, Inc.

PO Box 3096

Aiken, SC 29802

855.252.5263

mail@ConserveAiken.org

www.ConserveAiken.org



Paul Rideout,
President

Spring Cleaning? Include a Forest Bath

This is the time of year when people begin to shake off their winter doldrums, break out new things, and clean out old things. As you do your spring cleaning, make sure you include a little cleansing for yourself. Take a forest bath.

cancer. The increase in NK activity strengthens the immune system, which boosts our resistance to stress. Furthermore, the increased NK activity was observed for as long as thirty days after the forest therapy.

As a result of the positive effects shown in these studies, both public and private sectors of Japan are actively promoting forest therapy. There are currently thirty-one forest therapy "bases," which consist of a forest and walking paths typically managed by local governments. These bases are used to promote wellness, often in conjunction with other programs, such as hydrotherapy, aromatherapy, and dietary management.

I personally resist going to the doctor, so I am happy to hear that these studies confirm what we instinctively know to be true – outdoor activity in Mother Nature is good for us. I am also happy that Aiken is blessed with its own forest bathing bases, which are available to us any time we want to bathe. With the change of seasons, I plan to forest bathe more frequently. And with the increased health benefits I can expect to receive, who knows, maybe instead of his-and-her bathtubs...

Hold those thoughts. Enjoy your own forest bath. 🌿

Some of you might be thinking about those his-and-her bathtubs out in the middle of the woods you see on certain commercials. If you are thinking those kinds of clean thoughts, well...

I am thinking about the studies done by Japanese scientists on the relaxing effects of forests and trees on mental and physical health. Japanese scientists call this effect "forest therapy". Their physiological experiments confirm that the scent of trees, sounds of brooks, and the feel of sunshine through forest leaves can have a calming effect, helping people feel at ease, lower stress hormones, and reduce heart rate and blood pressure. Participants in "forest bathing" studies were also found to have an increase in their natural killer (NK) cells, which are a component of our immune system that fights

The Eagle Scout Project at the Carolina Bay A brief update . . .

Benjamin Rawls and his fellow Scouts installed the new educational kiosk at the Carolina Bay on March 18th and 19th. Sadly it was vandalized on the 20th . . .

Benjamin is now working to not only clean but complete the kiosk and will soon finalize the education panels.

Donations are desperately needed and may be mailed to:

Aiken Land Conservancy
PO Box 3096
Aiken, SC 29802

Please notate on the check that the funds are designated for the Carolina Bay Eagle Scout Project



**"THE IMAGE OF A
COMMUNITY IS
FUNDAMENTALLY
IMPORTANT TO ITS
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING.
IF ALL PLACES LOOK ALIKE,
THERE'S NO REASON TO
GO ANYWHERE."**

Ed McMahon, Conservation Fund

All proceeds benefit ALC

(continued from page 7)

Aiken community." The Aiken Land Conservancy will have Board Members and Staff available to answer questions and pass out information, becoming a visible force each Sunday at New Bridge. "We can't thank New Bridge and Kish enough for not only supporting us financially but also by giving us such a lovely venue to showcase the importance of preserving open space in Aiken County."

All ALC members including their families and friends are encouraged to join us Sundays at New Bridge for good food, some promised fun and the chance to meet a wide assortment of people while supporting financially the work the ALC does in our county. 🌿



302 Polo presents an afternoon gala combining the best of high goal polo and top level Thoroughbred racing to benefit Aiken Equine Charities and the Aiken Land Conservancy

Choose your Kentucky Derby favorite and join us for fun, food and cocktails - as we watch the Run for the Roses on the big screen!

Saturday May 7, 2011
3:00 pm
New Bridge Polo Club

Tickets: \$75 per person / \$65 for ALC members
Sponsorship opportunities are available
1-855-ALC-LAND
www.conserveaiken.org



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Land Management Practices at Work

Part 1

In 2001, Ms. Audrey Thomas gave Aiken Land Conservancy (at that time known as ALCOLT) a conservation easement on 330 acres in Barnwell County with an understanding that 180 acres of that tract would be given to the ALC at the time of her death which occurred in July 2006. The remaining 150 acres was left to her family who has held continuous title to the property since the Revolutionary War. Attached to the original 330 acre easement was a defined Forest Management Plan which detailed exactly what land management practices could and could not be used on the property.



Beautiful Live Oak located at the entrance to the property

Recently the ALC learned that a case of ‘root rot’ had been discovered on a portion of the 180 acre Thomas Tract that the ALC owns as well as on the 150 adjoining acres that we currently hold a conservation easement on. Annosum root rot primarily affects southern pines (loblolly, slash, shortleaf, and longleaf pines) and eastern white pine. The disease is most often associated with thinned pine stands located on sandy, well-drained soils; but can be found on a variety of soils and forest conditions. A tree can be infected by the fungus and show no above-ground symptoms until at least half the root system or the root collar is infected and the tree canopy starts to die. In the South, infection centers of Annosum root rot are active for about ten years spreading from tree to tree and inflicting widespread destruction.



Loblolly stand affected by root rot as shown by dead trees scattered throughout



Bennett Tucker looking for signs of root rot at the trees base

Members of the ALC Stewardship Committee visited the site in January of this year and saw first-hand the devastating effects of this fungus. Throughout the stand there were scattered dead and dying Loblolly pines and

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Annual Meeting Draws Large Crowd



It was standing room only in the clubhouse at Three Runs Plantation as ALC members and the general public gathered for our 2011 Annual Meeting. Despite rainy weather and a short drive over 100 people showed up to hear Jim Bitler, Onsite Coordinator for the Ossabaw Island Foundation, discuss many of the attributes gained by designating Georgia’s third largest barrier island as a state Heritage Preserve. Mr. Bitler gave a comprehensive overview of the history of the island and detailed the many ways the island is used today . . . namely for educational, research based and cultural endeavours.

Mr. Bitler also discussed some of the wildlife that makes Ossabaw unique, most specifically, the Ossabaw Hog which due to it’s confined environment has genetically changed very little since they were left on the island by Spanish explorers in the 1500’s. Many of Ossabaw hogs are black with thick coats, long snouts and upright ears. This “centuries-old look” is why Mount Vernon chose Ossabaw hogs to be the breed of choice for their living history interpretive programs. It is also why Colonial Williamsburg has been using the Ossabaw hog for their 1700’s animal husbandry and culinary practices

programs since 2005.

“The 2011 Annual Meeting exceeded our expectations in every way,” exclaimed Katie Roth, Executive Director of the ALC as she finished cleaning up the night of March 8th. “The cocktail hour was lively and well attended with ALC members grabbing a chance to mingle and socialize before the business part of the gathering began. I enjoyed hearing from individuals who feel as passionately about open space conservation as I do and came away with many ideas for future events and education opportunities.”

The ALC will be working with Mr. Bitler to plan a fall fieldtrip to the island later this year. More information will be available in future newsletters and email blasts. For individuals who attended the meeting and would like further information about the wonders of Ossabaw Island they can go to their website www.ossabawisland.org or contact Jim Bitler directly at 912.233.5104 or by emailing him at jim@ossabawisland.org.



ALC Welcomes Newest Business Sponsor

The Aiken Land Conservancy would like to welcome our newest business sponsor – **Aiken Saddlery & Supply, Inc.** Owned by Lydia Rose, this staple for Aiken’s horse community opened in 1979. Since then, riders of all disciplines flock there to shop for horse necessities – and gifts of course too.

Lydia is a long time resident of Aiken. She started the Aiken Pony Club in 1986 and was a charter member of the Aiken Driving Club. She also foxhunted here for many years. Lydia now enjoys gardening, walking through Hitchcock Woods with her two Jack Russell terriers and kayaking local lakes and rivers. Lydia has a great appreciation for the outdoors, and shares in the ALC’s vision of protecting precious land.

We encourage you to stop in and support this wonderful local business – and thank Lydia for her ongoing contributions to the Aiken Land Conservancy. **Aiken Saddlery & Supply** is open Monday through Friday from 9 am – 5:30 pm and Saturday from 8:30 am – noon.

Spotlight: Nicole Livermore



The ALC was fortunate to have artist Nicole Livermore design our logo for Derby Dreaming!

Nicole Livermore has worked as a freelance photographer, designer of print and web media, and provided writing and marketing expertise since 1998. Her love and desire to work with all things "horses" has been utilized by trainers, farms, stallion owners, veterinarians, clubs, associations and horse show management.

Born and raised in Wisconsin, Nicole came to Aiken in early 2009 in pursuit of a warmer climate and more equine friends.

When not behind the lens of a camera or at a computer, she can be found in the saddle competing at one of Aiken's various horse shows or voluntarily sweating for one of the local charities.

When asked about the inspiration behind the design of the Derby Dreamin' logo for the Aiken Land Conservancy, Nicole said "Fast and athletic horseflesh in a social setting can be enjoyed by young and old alike. Whether you are cheering on the underdog or the favorite, you can be assured the jockeys will not be without a whip and the polo players without a mallet."

For more information visit NicoleLivermore.com or search Facebook for Nicole Livermore Studio. 🌿



ALC Speaks to Aiken Board of Realtors

The Aiken Board of Realtors welcomed the ALC for its monthly lunch in March. ALC Board members Kent Cabbage and Mary Guynn gave a presentation about the ALC. Dr. Cabbage talked about ALC's history, mission and current activities. Ms. Guynn then spoke about conservation easements, including an informative overview of the related legal avenues that landowners go through to obtain an easement. Not lost on the crowd were the tax incentives of conserving land. The realtors were very inquisitive and asked a myriad of questions. As the lunch ended, several realtors stayed after to ask additional questions and gather more information. All of them agreed that the ALC presentation was extremely useful to the real estate community. Board members Paul Rideout, Katie Roth, and Meg Ferguson were on hand as well to answer questions. Since the talk, some realtors have contacted ALC board members about clients that are interested in conservation easements for their properties!



THE AIKEN LAND CONSERVANCY HAS A NEW PHONE NUMBER!

1-855-ALC-LAND

(1-855-252-5263)

Please call toll free for the latest information on upcoming events or leave a message and one of our staff members will be back in touch with you shortly!

ALC Embarks on Ambitious Mapping Project

The Education Committee is inventorying current ALC conservation easements and gathering conservation data from state and national land conservation organizations for a comprehensive GIS conservation mapping study which will provide ALC with a visual communication tool for gaining public and private support. We will model ALC's information outline on the Mecklenburg, Virginia, County study, "What Is It Worth," which effectively communicates the dollar value of land conservation.

The GIS map will also help ALC identify Aiken County land areas which can be strategically linked to state and national conservation efforts such as restoration of fragmented forests, migratory corridors, and watershed basins. The City of Aiken and Aiken County mapping offices have GIS technology and will be valuable partners for ALC's mapping initiative.

Much of this activity has been spurred by the generous

offer from the Aiken Historical Museum of display space for ALC in their first floor environmental room, something that should spur a great deal of interest in the issue of open space conservation. Working with Elliott Levy, the Education Committee has designed a temporary



Aiken Historical Museum

display for our presence at the Aiken Historical Museum which will be entitled: "CONSERVING AIKEN'S NATURAL WEALTH - Presented by Aiken Land Conservancy - Exhibit Coming Soon! Join Us Now!"

This temporary display will show ALC contact information and provide sponsorship brochures.

ALC's "CONSERVING AIKEN'S NATURAL WEALTH" exhibit at the museum will tell the story of Aiken County's use of its natural resources and communicate the importance of a conservation strategy to the Aiken Community while at the same time raising the Aiken Land Conservancy's visibility. 🌿

Sunday Proceeds Benefit Aiken Land Conservancy

eqwine.bar & grill

Thanks to a generous arrangement with New Bridge Polo Club, a percentage of proceeds from Sunday sales at eqwine.bar & grill will be donated to Aiken Land Conservancy. Beginning on April 10, 2011, with a final day Masters Party, and continuing into early July, the ALC will play a visible role in all Sunday activities at the popular polo club. According to Kishan Shaw, owner of the Aiken Hotel and operating manager of the recently opened eqwine.bar & grill, Sundays at New Bridge will be filled with exceptional polo as well as a number of new events including a Bocce Ball

Tournament and possibly the introduction of both Cricket and Water Polo leagues. According to Shaw, "we are excited to expand the opportunities for the public to enjoy the wonders of New Bridge including but certainly not limited to just equine enthusiasts. Throughout the Spring and early Summer there will be a number of family oriented activities scheduled so it is important that you continue to check back on our webpage hosted at www.newbridgepolo.com or www.aikentoday.com"

"This is a very beneficial relationship for the ALC to have," stated ALC President, Paul Rideout. "It provides us with wonderful exposure and the perfect opportunity to increase our membership and standing within the

(continued on page 9)