

Madison-Morgan Conservancy

Newsletter
Summer, 2017

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Letter from the President

Upward Bound

There's something big on the horizon. We think it's a revolving fund.

Thanks to the 1772 Foundation's support, the Conservancy has contracted Hanbury Preservation Consulting to conduct a feasibility study to determine the viability of a revolving fund in Morgan County. (www.1772foundation.org) Does Morgan County have enough resources to protect so the fund can revolve? Is there enough capital locally to create the fund? Does the Conservancy have the wherewithal to manage this type of fund or these types of projects? These are the questions the consultant is asking. We are anxiously awaiting the answers coming this fall. See page 3 to learn more about revolving funds.

In the meantime, we've had a very busy six months. So far, the Conservancy has moved back home to the Vason Building, hosted the Land Stewardship Workshop Series, rehabilitated the website, hired a new part-time program coordinator, launched the new Junior Conservancy, hosted the state's land trusts, revised and published FARMeander, planted trees with the Boys & Girls Club, called the Development Review Committee to function, hosted a fabulous Derby Day fundraiser, and begun the serious and demanding work of updating the Morgan County Greenprint.



Conservancy's annual Boys & Girls Club event; planting GA Forestry Commission Trees at Farmview Market

Thank you to the 115 people who showed up at the four public Greenprint meetings in June and July. We collected quality data for the map and should be submitting a draft of the new Morgan County Greenprint to the county planners and Board of Commissioners this fall. We expect this document to be adopted by the Morgan County Commissioners as the county's conservation policy, much like the 2004 Greenprint was adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan. We would like to publicly thank the group of local foundations who have helped fund this project: the Conrads Family Foundation, the Bryans Family Foundation, and Robert M. and Liliias Baldwin Turnell Foundation.

Soon you will see announcements about our upcoming Conservation Easement Workshop as well as our Transferable Development Rights (TDR) forum. We hope you will participate in these important educational forums this year and learn about how protecting resources inspires sustainable growth, both of which are needed to sustain Morgan County's quality of life.

With our increased capacity, we are challenging ourselves to go bigger and do better for Morgan County's citizens. We need to be relevant and progressive in the ways we protect Morgan County's resources and authenticity, and invite you to tell us what you think we should be doing in the future. It's the dawn of a new era for us, and we hope you will continue to support this effective and innovative work. If it's time to renew your membership, please do so, and as always, let us know how we can be of service. We're here for you and only because of you.

Sincerely,

Robert Trulock, President

Educational Forum

Land Stewardship Workshop Series Recap



From Left: Christine McCauley (MMC), Joe O'Brien (USFS), Jeff Kastle (GFC), Devon Dartnell (GFC)

In January, the Conservancy held its second Land Stewardship Workshop Series. Through a series of three workshops, landowners learned about forest management practices, prescribed fire, deer and quail habitat management, and the cost-share programs available in our region. Approximately forty people joined us each night at the Chop House. We thank Jeff Kastle, Joe O'Brien, Charlie Killmaster, Paul Grimes, Scott Griffin, Sharon Holbrooks, and Devon Dartnell for presenting such valuable information.

This is what we learned:

Don't move firewood! You may be moving the Ips Beetle.

Morgan, Greene, Putnam, and Jasper are having a major Ips Beetle outbreak. There is little data available about the Ips Beetle, so please contact your local GA Forestry Commission field office to learn more. www.gfc.state.ga.us

Burn your forests regularly (but be sure to get a burn permit!). Fire is an ecological imperative. Become "Prescribed Fire Certified." www.gatrees.org

There is more fire in the Southeast than in the rest of the country combined.

If you're transitioning from cropland to forestland, check out the NRCS CRP program to learn more about the cost-share opportunities available. www.nrcs.usda.gov

Landowners wanting to permanently protect their farmland or wetlands should check out the NRCS ACEP and WRE programs to learn more about the cost-share opportunities available.

Invest in your forests/wildlife habitat (prescribe burn, cut permanent fire breaks, plant high-producing oaks for abundant food) before investing in food plots which should simply supplement the nutritional gaps in the native habitat. www.nrcs.usda.gov

1 hunter per 100 acres is a good ratio for hunt clubs.

Thanks to our partners Georgia Power, Georgia Forestry Commission, and the Greene-Morgan Forest Landowners, the Land Stewardship Workshop Series II was a success.

Educational Forum

The Greenprint is On



Residents provide input during one of the four public meetings

This summer, Conservancy staff met with residents in Bostwick, Buckhead, Madison, and Rutledge to discuss the Morgan County Greenprint Plan. The Greenprint, originally developed in 2004, serves as a long-term conservation strategy for the County by mapping publicly-identified important places and resources, and providing guidance on how to protect them. In our meetings around the County, we heard from over 115 people, whom we asked to identify significant natural, agricultural, and historic resources in Morgan County to help us update the Greenprint Plan in 2017.

Over the course of our meetings, we had many interesting conversations and learned about cemeteries, native plant groves, springs, and historic homes that were previously unknown to us. We also heard from people with ideas about creating a kayak water trail on the Apalachee River, trails at Indian Creek Park, and a bike rest stop to accommodate cycle tourism. These are just a few of the great ideas we captured through these public meetings that will be documented in the Greenprint Plan. Once complete, the Greenprint will serve as a guiding document for protecting resources that are valuable to Morgan County's residents and landowners and will help maintain a quality of life for future generations.

We thank the Conrads Family Foundation, the Bryans Family Foundation, and the Robert M. and Liliias Baldwin Turnell Foundation for their support of this important community project.

Educational Forum

Planting Seeds (or Trees) for Future Generations

We celebrated Earth Day this year by planting trees with the Boys & Girls Club. In partnership with Kelly Products Inc. and the GA Forestry Commission, the Conservancy hosted our annual Boys & Girls Club outing at Farmview Market. Each Boys & Girls Club participant planted at least one tree (all donated by the GA Forestry Commission). We got our hands dirty planting for future generations! Some of the participants will come back to Farmview Market one day and look out to see their trees shading the walking trail around the park. They will be proud, and that makes us proud of our work in growing a conservation ethic in Morgan County's youth.

After all the trees were planted, we walked the trails and cooled off inside with ice cream. Thank you Farmview Market, GA Forestry Commission, and Boys & Girls Club for helping us celebrate Earth Day in such a fun and productive way.

Organizational News

What's All This About a Revolving Fund?



It's potentially the biggest project of our 17-year history.

A revolving fund is a pot of money used to purchase, protect, and then sell critical properties. Funds from the sale are reinvested into the revolving fund for the next project.

Think about your favorite crossroads - we could purchase (if they would sell), then protect the historic structures and landscapes with conservation easements (possibly reserving some limited development potential for future owners) and then sell to a "conservation buyer" who would live in/use the property for his/her purposes. The natural, agricultural, and historic resources would be permanently protected by the conservation easement.

A revolving fund would allow us to be proactive AND reactive in protecting Morgan County's special places. We could use the revolving fund to secure properties for future agricultural, ecological,

and/or recreational uses, and we could use it to protect endangered properties. In conjunction with the Greenprint Update, the Conservancy will be creating a list of endangered properties. If you have suggestions for that list, we would love to hear from you.

Non-profit conservation organizations like ours can accept donations of property, which allows flexibility in structuring deals with landowners who might want to offset capital gains by donating a portion of the property. Because we are in the business of saving places, not developing for the real estate market's highest and best use, we would be able to structure deals that would never pass muster in the private market. Although we are not profit-driven, we would aim to recoup our investment in the deal, if at all possible, so we could invest in the next place, hence the term "revolving fund."

The 1772 Foundation has awarded the Conservancy a grant to study the feasibility of such a fund here in Morgan County. Wow. Your conservancy is on the precipice of something really big. We are cautiously optimistic that a revolving fund is our next big step as an organization. Stay tuned for the results of the feasibility study this fall.

Organizational News

Announcing the Junior Conservancy!

The Madison-Morgan Conservancy is thrilled to announce that a group of fourteen high school students who live in Morgan County have been selected to participate in the inaugural Junior Conservancy Board for 2017-2018 school year.

Through education, civic engagement, volunteerism, and social events, the Junior Conservancy will offer these students an opportunity to become actively involved in protecting and learning about Morgan County's special natural, agricultural, and historic resources. Participants will serve on a mock board of directors, take on leadership roles, and create and execute the Junior Conservancy's activities and events throughout the school year.

Led by Conservancy Board Member Maryann Dartnell, the Junior Conservancy Committee consists of Sam Ball, Emily Buck, and Rachel Patrick and is staffed by Theresa Pippin. On behalf of all of us here at the Conservancy, we thank these students for their interest in and commitment to the community in which they live and look forward to working with them in the coming year.

Congratulations to the founding members of the Junior Conservancy Board:

Carson Adams	Catherine Ligon
Anna Beth Barber	Sarah Grey Ligon
Daisy-Jane Buck	Brooke Miller
Claire Coleman	Morgan Sarkin
Meredith Eidson	Caroline Schlabach
Lucia Hodges	Finn Williams
Wynn Howard	Will Woodard

Farm-to-Market Alliance

FARMeander Published in Morgan County Visitor's Guide

FARMeander your way through our region's beautiful and bountiful farm-filled landscape!

Use our most recent FARMeander map (inside this newsletter) to plan your self-guided trip, and explore the farms, markets, festivals, and inns that celebrate our agrarian roots year-round (be sure to call ahead to check if the farm can accommodate your visit).

"Keep farmers farming" we say. It's the only way Morgan County can continue to have a balanced tax digest, continue to have a strong agricultural industry, sustain the agrarian quality of life, and protect its natural, agricultural, and historic resources. Farmland preservation is the key to a landscape scale conservation effort.

The Conservancy is supporting farmers by publishing FARMeander, a map-based tour guide designed to get you to local food and producers. This year FARMeander was published in the Morgan County Visitor's Guide, thanks to our friends at the CVB (visitor center).

Meats, veggies, eggs, dairy, fruit and nuts await you! Enjoy the products from local farmers, some organic, some certified naturally grown, some conventional, but ALL LOCAL. Local food is fresher and therefore more nutritious. And just as importantly when you buy local, you are supporting local economies. \$1 spent on agricultural products turns over 7 times before leaving the local economy. Good for you, good for your community.

You can also find local food through certain restaurants, CSAs, Madison Locally Grown, and on-farm sales. Check out the FARMeander to find out more.

Bryans Family Farm Submitted for Centennial Family Farm Award



According to deeds found in the Morgan County Archives, James R. Norris purchased 56 acres on Broughton Road from the Walton Estate in 1884. By 1887 he and his brother J.D. owned 128 acres, and their property acquisition had just begun. The brothers owned and operated a significant cotton operation during the time when Cotton was King in Morgan County, and their descendants continue to farm that land today.

Morgan County has a rich farming history, and the GA Centennial Farm Awards honor that history every year. The Bryans Family Farm is the most recent of the farms the Conservancy has helped nominate.

An interesting note about this family: for most of the time the Norris and Bryans families owned this land (over 130 years) the

farming operations were run by the women who tended to outlive the men. There is a pattern in which the women survived their spouses by an average of 50 years:

- J.D. Norris' mother, Mary, survived her husband, James, by 40 years
- Jennie Norris survived J.D. Norris by 60 years
- Corrie Norris Bryans survived Grady Bryans by 45 years

On behalf of the Conservancy staff, we thank the Bryans family for allowing us to assist them in this process, as it is joyous and rewarding work. If you would like to explore listing your family farm, please contact us.

Beyond Morgan County

Taking Climate Action at Home

In response to the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord, business leaders, governors, and mayors from across the country have committed to fighting climate change at the local level. At our own local level here in Morgan County, the Conservancy has been working for over 17 years to protect the environment for current and future generations. Our local actions include, but are not limited to:

- Protecting farmland and promoting the local food system to insure a local source of food and reduce the energy costs of transporting food
- Providing information to local residents about sustainable practices through the Sustainability Symposium (2016) and the Sustainability Expo (2008)
- Protecting over 3,550 acres of open space which serves as a "carbon sink" by storing carbon that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere
- Promoting the use of tools such as TDR and conservation subdivisions that help protect air and water quality

The decision made at the national level only reinforces our need to take action locally in our own community and even in our own homes. Thankfully, there are many resources available to help us all save energy (and costs) to reduce our carbon footprint.

What is a Carbon Footprint?:

The amount of carbon dioxide and other carbon compounds emitted due to the consumption of fossil fuels by a particular person or group.

Calculate your household's carbon footprint using this free carbon calculator tool: <http://www.nature.org/greenliving/carboncalculator/index.htm>.

Incorporate these **home energy savings tips** from Georgia Power:

- Set thermostats at 78°F in the summer and 68°F in the winter. You can expect a 3-5% increase in energy use for every degree you set the thermostat lower in the summer or higher in the winter
- Install a programmable thermostat and receive up to \$100 in rebate if you are a GA Power customer
- Check refrigerators and freezers for energy loss. Keep them as full as possible, ensure seals are in good condition, and avoid keeping refrigerators in unconditioned garages. If you are a GA Power customer, take advantage of their Refrigerator Recycling Program—they'll pick up and recycle your secondary fridge or freezer for free, and give you \$35
- Switch to high efficiency compact fluorescent light bulbs which last up to 10 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs
- Replace your air filters regularly during the heating and cooling seasons
- For more tips, visit: <https://www.georgiapower.com/energy-efficiency/residential/pdfs/EnergyefficiencyGuide.pdf>

Involve your household in your effort to reduce your carbon footprint by challenging family members to turn off lights, only run full loads of laundry or dishes, and walk instead of drive.

Meet Our New Board Members

Each year the Conservancy invites a few people to join the Board of Directors. Led by our Board Development Committee, we court individuals whose expertise is helpful to our organization. In addition to agriculture, historic preservation, natural resources conservation, our board needs individuals with experience in forestry, accounting, food procurement, real estate development, land use law, event planning, etc. We are fortunate to have enlisted an excellent group to assist us in accomplishing our goals. Meet the four board members who have joined us this year.



Sam Ball and his wife, Sarah, have been Morgan County residents since 2011 and welcomed their beautiful daughter, Evie, in June of 2016. Prior to his work as a realtor at Madison Realty, Sam attended Georgia Southern University and majored in Small Business Management with an emphasis on Entrepreneurship. Sam grew up helping his family manage several hunting properties and has always had a passion for large tracts of land. He enjoys working with buyers interested in the same and has been a million dollar club member since 2015. Sam currently serves as secretary of the Madison Kiwanis Club, and is a CAT board member for the Children's First Foundation. He is also active in the Mentoring One Morgan program, has served as president of the Morgan Co. Quality Deer Management Association from 2013-16, and currently serves as a lay leader at Madison First United Methodist Church, where he and his family are members. Sam and Sarah have been instrumental in planning Derby Day for years, and Sarah co-chaired Derby Day 2017 and will do so again next year. Sam truly enjoys hunting and fishing and spending time with his wife, daughter and their three black labs.

Maryann Dartnell is an 18-year resident of Morgan County, educator, avid vegetable gardener, environmental champion and healthy lifestyle advocate. She earned a B.S. in Marine Biology from the College of Charleston and an MEd in Secondary Science Education from UGA. For the past 17 years, Maryann shared her passion for science and the environment as a science teacher at MCHS where she developed the IB Physics and IB Environmental Systems programs, and launched and coached the Robotics Team, in addition to leading her colleagues as science department chair. Maryann currently works as a Training Specialist at the Georgia BioScience Training Center in Social Circle (think Baxter) where she hopes to positively influence the workforce in Morgan County. She serves as the Chair of the new Junior Conservancy committee and is on the Morgan County Planning Commission Board.



Neil Horstman and his wife, Anne, moved to Madison three years ago after both retiring from careers in the field of historic preservation. Neil served as President of the White House Historical Association for twenty years. Prior to that, he was Resident Director of George Washington's Mount Vernon. Before Mount Vernon, he was Executive Director of Historic Savannah Foundation, Historic Kansas City Foundation, and Preservation Alliance of Louisville. Neil serves on the Board of the Madison-Morgan Cultural Center and is a Senior Associate at the cultural management consulting firm, Bryan & Jordan, in Richmond, Virginia. Anne and Neil have a daughter, son-in-law, and two grandchildren who live in Atlanta.

Shandon Land grew up in the small Florida town of Mount Dora, which was very similar to the Madison of today. She received her B.A. and M.A. from FSU, which prepared her for her career as a guidance counselor and child advocate. Since moving to Madison, Shandon has served on the Main Street Advisory Board, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Downtown Development Authority, and the GA Initiative for Community Housing. In addition to her volunteer work, she has had the opportunity to explore her interests in architecture and preservation by renovating historic homes. Shandon and her husband, David, have two sons and three grandchildren. Just ask Shandon about her granddaughter, Sadie, born July 3, 2017, and she will fill you in on every detail!



Meet Our New Staff

Theresa Pippin, Program Coordinator

Hired in January 2017, Theresa Pippin assists the Conservancy on a part-time basis with developing and implementing several programs, including the Junior Conservancy, Farm-to-School, and the Greenprint Plan. With experience working at UGA's Cultural Landscape Lab and the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, Theresa brings her knowledge of planning, community engagement, landscape preservation, and grant writing to the team. Having worked on numerous farms, including managing a ginger farm in Savannah, she can also drive a tractor and plow a field, though she hasn't needed to use these skills at her job with the Conservancy yet. Theresa holds a degree in Anthropology from the College of William and Mary and a Masters in Environmental Planning and Design from the University of Georgia. She and her husband Scott live in Athens where Theresa serves on the Keep Athens Clarke County Beautiful Board of Directors.

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Join or Renew Your Membership Today!

Madison-Morgan Conservancy
P.O. Box 752, Madison, GA 30650
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Annual Membership Form

Support the Conservancy's mission with your annual membership:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Daniel Morgan Society \$5,000 +
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Membership

Watershed Donors Needed

Each year, the Conservancy attempts to match a \$50,000 grant we received from the Waterfall Foundation in 2009 by raising \$50,000 through private donations of \$1,000 or more. Those donors are known as Watershed Donors.

Watershed Donors contribute significantly to the financial stability the Conservancy needs to be an effective and agile organization. This year, with our growing organization and expanded programming, we need an influx of capital. We hope you will become a Watershed Donor to support our mission. Please see the membership form in this newsletter to see the Watershed Donor Membership Levels or contact us if you would like to know more: 706-818-8046 or tdickinson@mmcGeorgia.org.

Our Vision: We envision a thriving Morgan County to be a healthy, beautiful place to live and work for current and future residents, where clean air and water, abundant wildlife, forestry, agriculture, and heritage tourism are vital and contribute to the regional economy. We aim to preserve the beautiful public vistas, agrarian heritage, rural crossroads, and small town atmosphere while attracting small to medium sized businesses to provide essential jobs and sustain our balanced tax digest. We envision an organization that makes an impact locally and uses its success to promote conservation and balanced growth throughout Georgia.



MADISON-MORGAN
CONSERVANCY

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Madison-Morgan Conservancy
P.O. Box 752
Madison, GA 30650

(706) 818-8046

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Return Service Requested

Need to Renew? Check Your Mailing Label.

The date printed above your name on the mailing label is the last date on which you paid your annual membership dues. Please renew annually to support the Conservancy's work and to expand our programming.

Find your new FARMeander guide inside!

Summer, 2017

This newsletter is printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper.

Derby Day Update

What a day for Derby Day! The weather was perfect at the Godfrey-Hunt House, and 300 people joined us for an amazing Derby Day - we broke our fundraising record! Thank you to all who worked so hard to make Derby Day such a huge success, especially the sponsors, hosts, ticket holders, auction bidders, student volunteers, and Derby Day Committee. We send our most sincere thanks to Lyn and Whitey Hunt for hosting Derby Day this year. Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 5, 2018 - we'll be getting down and derby again (details to come). We hope you will join us for our only fundraiser of the year.



The mission of the Madison-Morgan Conservancy is to provide public education on conservation matters and to protect and enhance the heritage and quality of life of the residents of Morgan County by preserving historic sites, greenspace, farmland, and timberland.