

American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc.

Post Office Box 204
Port Republic, MD 20676



NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 - Number 4

July 24, 1987

Editors: Ellen and David Farr, 4512 Tonquil Place, Beltsville, MD 20705 (301-937-8160)

Board of Directors

Ralph H. Dwan, Jr., President
Peter Vogt, Vice President
Edward HacsKaylo, Secretary
Gary A. Loew, Treasurer
Frank R. Caldwell, Jr.
Austin F. Canfield, Jr.
Elaine V. Cochran
Donald C. Dahmann
Oliver S. Flint, Jr.
John H. Jones
Don Kollmorgen
Daniel Priest
Norman E. Prince
Joseph Steller, Jr.
John Mark Switzer
Caroline E. Van Mason

Good News from the IRS

On July 20, we received IRS approval of our application for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. If you have been waiting to be sure that your contribution to the American Chestnut Land Trust was tax deductible, now is the time to join us. Settlement date, October 1, 1987, is just nine weeks away. While the news from our treasurer is encouraging, your contributions are urgently needed.

If this is your first Newsletter...

The American Chestnut Land Trust is a non-profit corporation formed for the purpose of purchasing the Gravatt/Miles property (approximately 450 acres) located in Calvert County, Maryland. Our goal is to protect this fine example of southern Maryland forest and farm land from future development by forming a land trust and applying for designation as an Agricultural Preservation District. In April we signed a contract to purchase the land for \$850,000. An \$85,000 deposit was made which will become part of the \$400,000 down payment due at settlement, October 1, 1987.

Message from the President

An open letter to a friend: July 3, 1987

"Dear John,

"On the eve of the celebration of our national independence in the 200th year of our Constitution, my reflection takes me back to that notable Maryland statesman, Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. At a tender age he was sent by his father, perhaps with a premonition of the influence of his son's ideas and eloquence would have on the future of the colonies, from their estate outside Baltimore, to complete his education first in France and then in England.

"Allow me to draw a parallel of you tending to your gardens on the shores of the Chesapeake, while until recently you would look east over the Bay towards France, where both of your sons were gaining maturity. You made certain that they would not return to an intellectual wasteland by your vigorous leadership in the Study Group. But what of your 'estate' that is threatened with the 'wasteland' of suburban development?

"You and I have debated the need for the American Chestnut Land Trust with similar seriousness of purpose as earlier Americans debated the structure of our federal system. Is it not time to recognize again that proper balance is the solution? Development must be matched with the preservation of open space and woodlands. This is our goal in acquiring the Gravatt/Miles tract. Few acres of Calvert County are as intensely developed as Scientists' Cliffs. Do we not owe a debt to Calvert County and future generations, which can only be repaid by setting aside land in a public trust?

"The land trust needs you as 'statesman' and 'farmer' to become a charter member. Many ordinary 'citizens,' lacking your wisdom and wit, have worked long hours to organize the trust, to satisfy the requirements of the IRS, to solicit broad support, to apply to become an Agricultural Preservation District and to develop a forest management plan; now, having benefited from your questions and suggestions, we need your full commitment. It is time to resolve the debate and move forward together to realize this dream.

"With respect and affection, Ralph"

Note: Printed with permission. And, John agreed to become a charter member.

Treasurer's Report

Our fund raising efforts are proceeding about on target. Our current assets, including the \$85,500 down payment on the land purchase, amount to \$311,494. To cover the payment due at settlement, closing costs, and future operating costs, we need to raise an additional \$94,000 by October 1st. We have \$43,600 in firm, unpaid pledges, leaving about \$50,000 needed by October 1st. In order to plan (and preserve the mental health of your Board of Directors) we must have the money in hand by August 1st or a firm pledge of payment by September 1st.

Our expenses to date this year have been \$6,076.67. Total expenses have been held to about 2% of total receipts, most of this for legal services necessary to incorporate and to file and process the request for tax exempt status. Expenses should drop even further now that most of these costs are behind us.

The *good news*, reported elsewhere in this bulletin, is that we have received notice from the Internal Revenue Service that our request for tax exempt status has been approved. This means that all tax deductions claimed for donations to the ACLT are, without any question, legal deductions.

I know that many of you have been holding off on your contributions because you wanted to earn interest in your own accounts as long as possible and because you wanted to be absolutely certain that you could claim the tax deduction. For those of you who have been waiting, *now is the time to contribute*. We are very close. Please help us over the top. Any contribution, no matter how large or small, moves us closer to our first stage goal of \$400,000 by October 1st. The table at the right lists the distribution, by amount donated, of contributions received so far.

Amount(\$)	No. of Contributions
0- 499	120
500- 999	14
1000- 4999	111
5000- 9999	13
≥10,000	5

(Charter membership = \$2500)

In addition, we have received two contributions from other environmental organizations that support our efforts—The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Merrill G. and Emta E. Hastings Foundation of New York. These are pleasant surprises since we had planned to begin our major efforts to obtain corporate and foundation contributions after settlement. We have also received a contribution from the Governor's Run Development Corporation with whom we share a substantial portion of the Governor's Run watershed.

Preservation District Efforts Gaining Approval

On Tuesday, July 14, at 10:45 a.m., Calvert County Commissioners gave unanimous approval to the ACLT petitions to establish as Agricultural Preservation Districts two ACLT woodland properties lying east and west of Scientists' Cliffs Road (131.7 acres and 336.92 acres, respectively). The Commissioners expressed their personal enthusiasm for our efforts to protect the land from future development.

The petitions, filed on May 8 with the county Office of Planning and Zoning, indicate ACLT's intention to commit the land to agricultural, forestry or related use thus precluding residential development in perpetuity. The petitions were signed by Thomas Axley, Personal Representative for the Estate of Annie R. Gravatt, and Ralph Dwan, President, ACLT, Inc., Contract Purchaser.

What Lies Ahead?

Now that the County Commissioners have given their approval, the petitions will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation which administers the program for the State. Assuming approval at both the State and County levels, the ACLT Board of Directors will have the option of going into either program.

In the County program, the County offers development rights representing the houses that will not be built on the property. The development rights may be sold to owners or developers of land in a Transfer Zone where higher density development has been authorized to enable them to build additional homes on their property. The value of development rights is determined by the free market system.

Under the State program, the State will purchase an agricultural preservation easement. The value of the purchased easement is determined by the amount of money available for the program in a given year and the numbers of petitioners competing for a share. At present the revenues from the two programs are considered comparable. However, the process for the State program may take two or more years to complete. See related story on page 4.

Board Meetings

The next two ACLT Board meetings are scheduled for August 1 and August 29. Meetings are held at the Battle Creek Nature Center at 10:00 a.m. and are open to all.

ACLT Members

Our thanks to all who have supported this project to date. Encourage others to join you in this cause. The nine weeks between now and the settlement date of October 1, 1987, are critical in our fund-raising effort.

Charter Members

Stuart Armstrong &
Brenda Bates
Mr. & Mrs. Wallace L. Ashby
Dr. & Mrs. John Axley
The Honorable & Mrs. William H. Ayers
Mr. & Mrs. Earl B. Bailey
Mr. & Mrs. Clete P. Baum
Mrs. Christine C. Boesz
Mr. Daniel Boesz
Mr. & Mrs. Francis L. Brannigan
Mr. & Mrs. Frank R. Caldwell, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Austin Canfield, Jr.
Mr. John E. Catlett
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur E. Cochran
Mr. Peter Cochran
Mrs. Elaine V. Cochran
Drs. Donald C. & Judith Dahmann
Master Nicholas M. Dahmann
Dr. and Mrs. John C. DeWilde
Mr. & Mrs. Robert M. Douglass
Mr. & Mrs. Robert F. Drury
Mrs. Lincoln Dryden
Mrs. Mary Dwan
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph H. Dwan, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Samuel M. Ellsworth
Dr. & Mrs. David Farr
Mr. & Mrs. Jefferson Feagin
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis R. Firth
Mr. & Mrs. Philip A. Fleming

Dr. & Mrs. Oliver S. Flint, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Maurice Fried
Mr. Roger B. Fuson
Dr. & Mrs. William H. Gilbert
Mr. David M. Graham
Dr. Edward U. Graham
Mr. & Mrs. John D. Graham
Dr. & Mrs. Edward Hacskaylo
Mr. Charles F. Hacskaylo
Mr. William E. Hacskaylo
Ms. Margaret A. Hacskaylo
Mr. & Mrs. Cornelius G. Harrell, Jr.
Dr. and Mrs. Ronald W. Hodges
Mr. William J. Holliman, Jr.
Col. & Mrs. Lukas E. Hoska, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Phillip S. Hughes
Mr. & Mrs. Robert A. Jaeger
Mrs. Madelene A. Johnston
Lucy Jones &
Edward Muth
Mr. Don H. Kollmorgen
Mr. & Mrs. Walter J. Lippold
Mr. & Mrs. E. Allan Loew
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Loew
Mr. & Mrs. John M. Lucas
Ambassador and Mr. William D. Lynch
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Roger Majak
Mr. & Mrs. William T. McDonald
Mr. & Mrs. William McGillicuddy

Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Mihursky
Ms. Dianne M. Nestor
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph W. Nisonger
Mr. & Mrs. Arnold E. Petty
Mr. & Mrs. Norman E. Prince
Mrs. Nancy Collins Rubino
Mrs. Margaret F. Saville
The Honorable Irene F. Scott
Ms. Susan C. Simon
Mr. Paul Stathis
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Stathis
Mr. & Mrs. J. Mark Switzer
Dr. & Mrs. George Switzer
Mr. & Mrs. G. L. Tatum
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Turner
Dr. & Mrs. Ernest Umberger
Col. Caroline E. Van Mason
Mrs. Emmy Vogt
Dr. & Mrs. Peter Vogt
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Warner
Mrs. M. June Whitson
Mr. Merrill Wilcox
Mr. & Mrs. Paul C. Wilkins
Ms. Louise Woerner
Dr. & Mrs. D. Montgomery Wood
Mrs. Doris B. Zitzewitz
Capt. Herbert C. Zitzewitz

Regular Members

Mr. & Mrs. James E. Ablard
Mr. & Mrs. E. Joe Albertson, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Ernest S. Ambler
Col. B. Appleton
Ms. Rose A. Bateman
Dr. & Mrs. John L. Bateman
Col. & Mrs. O. B. Beasley
Mr. Frank A. Bennett
Mrs. Isabelle Berezovsky
Mr. & Mrs. John G. Bergin
E. Berzowski
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bibb
Mr. & Mrs. Stuart F. Bland
The Honorable David E. Bonior
Mr. & Mrs. Walter R. Boynton
Col. H. Lee Briggs
Ms. Penelope Briggs Brown
Ms. Christina Freeman Bryan
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen M. Bunker
Mr. & Mrs. Charles R. Burton
Ms. Carol A. Caldwell
Mrs. Elizabeth H. Canter
Mr. & Mrs. James T. Cavanaugh
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne E. Clark
Robert & Jane Coffin
P. Cohen &
R. Mandelbaum
Mr. & Mrs. Murray Comarow
Dorothy Conard
Mrs. Margery R. Cunningham
Ms. Esther L. Doak
Mrs. Milda Drennan
Rev. Paul M. Dudziak
Mrs. Ann C. Dunnington
Mr. James Felix
Mr. Fred O. Ferris, III
Carl Fleischhauer &
Paula Johnson
Dr. Philip Franklin
Dr. & Mrs. Mark R. Frazer
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Freeman

Mr. & Mrs. Philmore W. Geoghegan
Governor's Run Development Corp.
Mr. & Mrs. H. Underwood Graham
Mrs. James Greene
Mr. Garner T. Grover
Dr. & Mrs. John Hagenbucher
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hahnemann
Ms. Sue Hamilton
Mr. & Mrs. Byron R. Hanke
Merrill G. & Erita E. Hastings
Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel M. Head
Mr. & Mrs. Michael S. Hildebrand
Mr. & Mrs. Conrad L. Hoska
Ms. Susan E. Johnson
Mrs. Ann Jones
J. T. Kavanaugh
Dr. & Mrs. Victor Kennedy
Mr. & Mrs. James J. King
M. B. Knicks, Jr.
Ms. Judith D. Landis
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Leighty
Mr. John E. Lemerond
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Lesser
Mrs. Lisa Mandell
Mr. & Mrs. Charles N. Manning
Mr. & Mrs. Michael K. Manning
Dr. & Mrs. David Mast
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon P. McDonald
Mr. Peter T. McSwain
Ms. Marion S. Michael
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph A. Mihalcik
Mr. and Mrs. Curtis W. Moore
Ms. Margaret G. Moran
Cdr. & Mrs. Patrick Murphy
Ms. Sally Ann Nelson
Dr. John O. Nestor
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Nestor
Ms. Evelyn W. Nestor
Mr. Morris B. Nix, Jr.
Dr. James R. Nugent
Mr. & Mrs. Franklin W. Nutter

Mr. & Mrs. John O'Neill
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Oliver
Mrs. Dorothy N. Parr
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald E. Parsons, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. William F. Pfeiffer
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen T. Phillips
Rev. William Plummer
Ms. Patricia A. (Mitzi) Poole
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel B. Priest
Ms. Carol A. Prince
Mr. & Mrs. Norman Prince, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Rabenold
Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Randel, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Michael G. Reges
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Ross
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick J. Salmon
Mrs. Walter Saunders
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Saunders, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. John R. Saunders, Jr.
W. L. Saunders, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Serpan, Jr.
Mr. Michael C. Shisler
Dr. Nancy McK. Smith
Ms. Theresa (Sue) Sousa
Mr. George P. Spellman
Mr. & Mrs. George Springsteen
Mr. & Mrs. Geoffrey E. Stamm
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Steller, Jr.
Mrs. Alma Straw
Mr. & Mrs. Louis Tacchetti
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Tollerton
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Ulanowicz
Ms. Frances Valanidas
Mrs. Janet Weaver
Mr. & Mrs. John Whisman
Mrs. Everett Wilcox
Mr. & Mrs. Dwight F. Williams
Ms. Grace C. (Susie) Wood
Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Young
Ms. Jeanne C. Young
Mrs. Harry Zehner, Jr.

Volunteers Needed

Many options are being explored as sources of funds for financing the balance due on the loan for the property. Input from members with experience in writing grant applications, evaluating potential sources of funding, and in dealing with foundations would be appreciated.

Contact any Board member or the editors if you can help out.

Program Open Space

Program Open Space (POS) was established by the State of Maryland in 1969 to acquire land for state and country parks, to purchase agricultural easements, etc. POS derives its funds from a modest 0.5% real estate transfer tax. POS funds have been spent in Calvert County to help acquire the three district recreational parks, the Battle Creek Nature Center, beach property in Chesapeake Beach, a parking lot for the Calvert Marine Museum, and purchase of development rights (agricultural easements) from a few county farms.

Unfortunately, in 1984 the State placed a cap on POS funds, siphoning off the balance of the transfer tax revenue for purposes other than originally intended. This year, for example, the revenues from the tax will have generated more than \$70 million, of which only \$24 million (the cap) went to POS.

With kudos from environmental groups such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the new Schaefer administration introduced legislation to restore to POS the revenues from the transfer tax, and to remove the 1990 "sunset" (expiration) date. Your ACLT Board wrote to delegates Tom Rymer and Ernie Bell, as well as Sen. Bernie Fowler, urging them to support the bill. Sen. Fowler, co-sponsor of this bill in the Senate, and Del. Bell already replied to our letter. The version of the bill as recently passed is a compromise; although certainly an improvement over the present situation. While not eliminating the cap, the new law raises it first to \$29 million, then next year to \$39 million dollars. Of this amount, \$5 million is allocated to Agricultural Preservation Districts.

—Peter Vogt

American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc.
Post Office Box 204
Port Republic, MD 20676