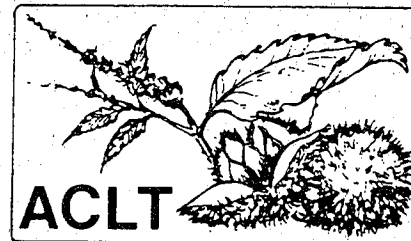


# American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc.

Post Office Box 204  
Port Republic, MD 20676



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 5 - Number 3

Summer 1991

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### Who wants a rifle range?

The answer may be nobody, at least not in a nature preserve. But ACLT has sought to acquire a rifle range ever since purchasing the Gravatt property located just south of the Weems farm (East View Farm) on Scientists Cliffs Road. Since the 1940's young men and boys have honed their skills in weaponry at a small (1.8 acres) site just off the old logging road next to the farm entrance as it enters the woods (see X on map). Flippo Gravatt had transferred this parcel to the Scientists Cliffs Association (SCA), so that the community would undertake the supervision of the facility. ACLT land surrounds the rifle range on three sides, and since the goals of ACLT were hardly compatible with this activity, we wanted the rifle range in order to close it down. This has now been done with a land swap.

What did we give up to get the rifle range? Several years ago Scientists Cliffs Association acquired two small parcels (total of .4 acres) for expansion of their water system. When plans changed, those parcels were traded back to the Gravatts and were included in our purchase of the Gravatt estate. Thus, ACLT owned .4 acres surrounded by SCA property. SCA agreed to swap the rifle range for the two small parcels. The transfers have been completed and the rifle range is officially closed. Please notify any ACLT board member if you see or hear any activity that would indicate a violation.

—Ralph Dwan with Mark Switzer

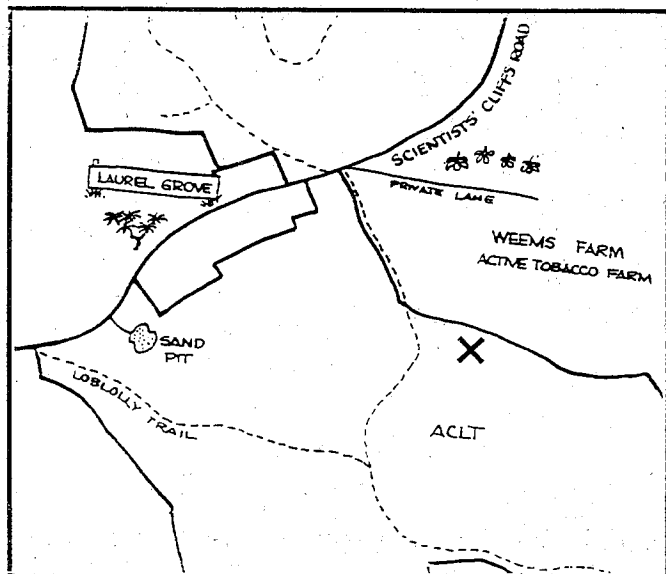
### Kenwood Property

In the Spring newsletter we reported on a contract being submitted for the purchase of the 91.62-acre Kenwood parcel. Now we are pleased to report that the contract was accepted at a price of \$220,000 (the value established by our appraisal) and settlement took place on April 29, 1991. Aileen Hughes already has us well into the process of qualifying this parcel as an Agriculture Preservation District (ADP). If you drive east on Governors Run Road past the BG&E power lines, the ACLT land is located primarily on the south side of the road but includes the cleared areas on the north side.

Once we had a signed contract, the effort began to involve our neighbors in this project. On April 23 a meeting was held at the home of Vince Keyser (257-3419), President of the Kenwood Beach Association. Attending to hear our presentation and to discuss future cooperation were representatives of Kenwood Beach, Governors Run and Western Shores. It was pointed out that ACLT needed assistance in planning and land management, as well as financial help since the purchase virtually exhausted our reserve fund for land acquisition. That fund needs to be reestablished to provide for future projects.

The response has been very encouraging. The Governors Run Development Corporation, which owns the adjoining 80 acres on the north, contributed \$2,500 as a sustaining (lifetime) membership. Kenwood Beach Association invited us to make another presentation at their membership meeting in May. There Vince Keyser gave Aileen Hughes a check for \$2,500 on behalf of the Association. They agreed to send out an ACLT "Invitation to Partnership" mailing to all their members, and as a result a number of individuals have become ACLT members.

Western Shores Civic Association signed up for an annual organization membership and appointed Ted Post (586-0848) to head a management team. The team plans to "survey" the property to determine trash removal needs, possible trails, areas for possible reforestation, etc. Meanwhile, the ACLT Board has authorized the Land



Acquisition/Preservation Committee to secure a survey to establish boundaries and verify the actual acreage. The committee will keep jurisdiction over this project until a joint management team has been set up to operate under the ACLT Land Management Committee. If you want to help, please contact me (586-1759), Vince Keyser of Ted Post.

—Ralph Dwan

### **1991 Budget Update**

The Board of Directors amended the proposed 1991 budget at the June 1st meeting. Due to the unexpected purchase of the Kenwood tract we decreased projected interest income by \$3,000 and increased land survey costs by \$7,500 to provide for a complete survey of the new property. Other major adjustments included increases in the land management budget by \$1,500, equipment repair by \$600 and the scholarship fund by \$700. We also decreased equipment purchase costs by \$1,500 (to reflect the actual cost of the tractor) and eliminated the budgeted \$2,000 interest expense as we paid cash for the property. Overall, the final, approved budget estimated \$29,325 in income and \$35,600 in expenses.

### **Other News**

The Kenwood property purchase drew down most of our cash reserves; we have approximately \$43,000 remaining in liquid assets.

In accordance with our 5-year plan and our intention to operate within the guidelines established by the Land Trust Alliance "Standards and Practices," we have initiated annual audits of our financial practices. The first group of audits, performed by Phelps & Rhymer, P.A., will be retroactive to our formation in 1986. In the future we will have audits prepared annually. This year's audits should be completed during the next couple of months.

—Gary Loew, Treasurer

### **May 1991 — Prince Frederick's treated waste water no longer flows into Parkers Creek!**

For almost a quarter century, Prince Frederick's waste water treatment plant has discharged its treated effluent into Parkers Creek about a mile upstream from the "beaver dam" site, the upstream tidal limit. In late May the new land treatment facility near Barstow went into operation. The freshwater flow in Parkers Creek is now again being fed mostly by rainwater and springs, as it had been since time immemorial.

The new treatment plant is of the "slow-rate irrigation" type. Raw sewage is stored in special lagoons for 30 days while air is pumped through it, oxidizing the organic materials. What remains is clear water with nitrogen and phosphorous compounds in solution. Upon chlorination, this fertilizer-laden water is sprayed into woodland or fields on the 100-acre site. The growth of vegetation is promoted by the extra "rainfall" and nutrients, and some of the water replenishes the water table. Best of all, the phosphorous and nitrogen is not discharged into the already nutrient-overloaded Chesapeake Bay!

Concerns about the Parkers Creek plant were expressed even before the facility was built. On January 19, 1967, the developer of Scientists Cliffs (G. F. Gravatt) wrote to the State's Department of Water Resources about effluent standards. At that time, Gravatt was concerned that improperly treated water might enter the Bay, posing a health hazard to swimmers. In the tragic

absence of long-term monitoring, it is impossible to identify the effects of the discharge on Parkers Creek, but catastrophic changes would not have gone unnoticed.

Prince Frederick's waste water received little publicity until the early 1980's when the County government began to plan a doubling of plant capacity, from 150,000 to 300,000 gallons per day, to accommodate anticipated population growth. It was mostly the tireless efforts of Dr. William Johnston that persuaded Calvert County to go the land treatment route for Prince Frederick's sewage. Bill armed local organizations with the information base they needed to make the pitch for land treatment. For example, then-President of the Scientists Cliffs Association, Caroline Van Mason, sent a letter to the County Commissioners (June 1, 1982) in which the benefits of land treatment were spelled out, including the chance for Federal cost-sharing. The following points were also raised: 1. Calvert County should do its bit to prevent eutrophication of the Chesapeake. 2. The existing discharge was up to twice the natural flow of Parkers Creek under drought conditions and the treatment plant was periodically not meeting the State effluent limitation for discharge to Parkers Creek (conditions detrimental to environmentally sensitive wetland areas such as Parkers Creek).

But where to locate the new facility? Initial plans to place the aeration lagoons on County-owned land near Calvert High School, with the effluent to be sprayed on the Hughes Tree Farm, ran into local opposition. It seems we all want our collective disagreeable to be disposed of somewhere else! In the end the County purchased land next to the Barstow landfill.

We wish the new treatment plant many years of trouble-free operation, and the trees and grasses good growing. And we congratulate Parkers Creek for becoming still a bit more pristine.

—Peter Vogt

### **ACLT Represented at Regional and National Conferences**

In May, Don Dahmann and Donna Ari attended the Maryland Land Trust Alliance Training Workshop held at a conference center in Montgomery County. ACLT neighbors Mary Lou Lane of The Willows Civic Association and John Smith of the Plum Point Land Trust also attended. As members of an established land trust, our representatives found themselves in the position of giving encouragement and advice to those who were just getting started.

June 3-5 Caroline Van Mason attended an Environmental Leadership Conference, *Searching for Success*, sponsored jointly by The Smithsonian Institution, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Council on Environmental Quality, and Renew America. Approximately 200 Leaders from nationally recognized successful programs, including the American Chestnut Land Trust, and representatives from Federal Agencies such as the US Forest Service, attended the Washington DC meeting. Participants were brought together to explore environmental solutions and discuss local issues that might have national or global ramifications.

Workshop sessions most relevant to ACLT were on Forest Protection and Urban Forestry and Land Stewardship with respect to Public Land and Open Space Protection. It is hoped that the published proceedings will form

the basis for a common direction for the agencies involved and, perhaps as a spinoff, some guidance to local programs.

The Conference offered an opportunity to meet and talk with participants reflecting a broad range of interesting projects. Some saw existing legislation and the programs available through them to be positive forces. Others, as might be expected, were prepared to use the courts to further their goals such as saving the old growth forest of the northwest by suing the Forest Service to force it to obey the law. The dialogues were spirited, and how that spirit can be captured, given direction, and shaped into policy through this Conference will be interesting.

### **Treasurer's Report (6/1/91)**

#### ***Tax Exempt Status***

Importantly for all of you who value your annual ACLT tax deduction, we received our *permanent* tax exempt status under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Many of you who have been with us since the beginning will recall that the IRS initially grants temporary tax exempt status. After 4 years of operations we applied for permanent status earlier this year. Our permanent status, granted on May 13, 1991 does not expire as long as we continue to operate within the framework of the IRS code as it pertains to public, non-profit organizations.

#### **New ACLT Finance Committee Appointed**

A Finance Committee has been established consistent with the approved recommendations of the Long Range Planning Committee. ACLT is most fortunate to have Joe Nisonger serving as Chairman, Norman Prince, Jr. and Jenny Stathis as committee members. The Committee has met twice, getting acquainted and learning about ACLT's financial practices and challenges. It has scheduled a third meeting in July, primarily to consider the ACLT budget process and setting up a new schedule for its development, review and approval.

#### **An Unusual Place Needs Your Help**

The enclosed environmental pamphlet prepared by the advisory board of the Battle Creek Cypress Swamp Nature Sanctuary was recently mailed to all households and landowners in the Battle Creek watershed. Although the Battle Creek Cypress Swamp is one of the most unusual places to need our help, the simple precautionary measures the pamphlet recommends to reduce pollutants flowing into our creeks and streams are equally valid for those who live in any of the other numerous watersheds that crisscross our Southern Maryland peninsula and ultimately drain into the Chesapeake Bay or Patuxent River.

If you have not yet visited the Cypress Swamp Nature Sanctuary on Gray's Road just south of the Sixes Road intersection (Route 506) in Prince Frederick, we urge you to do so. In addition to the beautiful nature trail (an easy walk on a wooden structure that lets you keep your feet dry), interpretive pamphlets and museum exhibits, there are year-round educational programs for children and adults. Annual Family memberships are \$15, Individual Memberships \$10, Seniors 65 and over \$7.50 and Students 18 and under \$5. Members will receive *The Peeper*, a quarterly newsletter with a three month schedule of

events and early notice of those programs requiring advance registration. Members receive discounts on program registration fees. There is a charming gift shop and many opportunities to volunteer. Membership requests may be mailed to Battle Creek Nature Center c/o Courthouse, Prince Frederick, MD 20678. Call 301-535-5327 for more information.

—Aileen Hughes

#### **ACLT a Janice Hollman Grant Recipient**

The Maryland Environmental Trust Board of Trustees recently approved seven grants from the Janice Hollman Grant fund to support local land trusts in their land protection efforts. The Fund is named for Janice Hollman, co-founder of the Severn River Land Trust and the Arundel Conservation Trust, who exemplified the citizen leadership necessary for the success of local land trusts.

ACLT has received \$5,431 to be used to offset administrative expenses including our printing and mailing costs, office supplies, preliminary title searches, appraisals, related legal expenses, meetings and seminars, community outreach and scholarship programs. To be eligible to receive grants from the Janice Hollman Grant Fund, a land trust must be a "qualified organization" as defined under Section 17(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and have executed a cooperative agreement with the Maryland Environmental Trust after July 1, 1990.

The Janice Hollman Grant Fund requires a 100% match of private funds. In ACLT's case the matching funds have been provided through the annual membership dues already received this year.

Other local land trust grant recipients were the Plum Point Environmental Land Trust, Lower Shore Land Trust, Magothy River Land Trust, Howard County Conservancy, Central Maryland Heritage League and the Annapolis Conservancy Board.

#### **Treasure the Chesapeake**

"Treasure the Chesapeake" is the message of the new state of Maryland license plates that are now available from the Motor Vehicle Administration. Featuring a Great Blue Heron, these license plates are exceptionally beautiful and their sale helps support the Chesapeake Bay Trust. They may be obtained for a one-time additional cost of \$20.00. Application for a new set of plates is available by calling (301)974-2941.

—Don Dahmann

#### **ACLT Calendar**

July 27, 1991 — Regular ACLT Board Meeting, 8:30 a.m., Battle Creek Nature Center.

September 28, 1991 — Regular ACLT Board Meeting, 8:30 a.m., Battle Creek Nature Center.

October 26, 1991 — ACLT Annual Membership Meeting. Details in the next newsletter.

#### **A New Calvert County Land Trust!**

The Plum Point Environmental Land Trust (PPELT), now being formed by some of the residents of Huntingtown, is targeting the eastern area of the County from Randle Cliffs to Dares Beach "for special conservation attention...the fragile wetlands, forests, natural beaches, majestic cliffs and state-designated endangered plants

and animals within the land trust focus area." Jeff Parker, leader of the trust steering group, says "the trust is being formed to preserve and protect the natural environment. The Plum Point Creek area is one of the few largely undeveloped watersheds remaining on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay."

ACLT, with its primary area of interest focussed on Governors Run, Parker Creek and Battle Creek watersheds, is proud to have been able to offer encouragement and guidance to this new dynamic group. Our paths first crossed last October when Jeff Parker and John Fales of the Neelds Estate Community of Huntingtown attended the ACLT Annual Meeting as guests of ACLT. In February, they and others participated in ACLT's program, "How to Form a Land Trust" sponsored by the Calvert County Public Library. Their new trust is now on the verge of incorporation and becoming a 501(c)(3) charitable organization under the IRS Code. Under ACLT's aegis, the Plum Point Land Trust was able to qualify this year for a \$2500 Janice Hollman grant.

Note: Members of ACLT and the Maryland Environmental Trust staff are meeting with the Ad Hoc Conservancy Committee of the Chesapeake Ranch Club Estates to explore ways to protect a forested area surrounding an active bald eagle's nest and also to conserve for the future as much open space as possible within the community.

### **ACLT Membership Report**

ACLT memberships now number 420 (134 Charter and Sustaining Lifetime Memberships and 286 Regular Memberships). 652 individuals are included in the 420 memberships. Between January 1 and June 1, 1991, 138 contributions were received for a total of \$10,280. In June, 1991, 19 memberships were dropped from the rolls because no contributions had been received in the last year.

### **Coastal Settlement Pressure**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has produced a valuable free publication that forecasts increasing settlement pressures on all of the nation's coastal areas, including the Chesapeake Bay. Calvert's projected population growth through 2010 is the third fastest of any county on the Chesapeake. *50 Years of Population Change Along the Nation's Coasts 1960-2010* is available from NOAA, National Ocean Service, 6001 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20851 or (301)443-8921.

—Don Dahmann

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