



# Conservation News and Notes

September, 2008

**The Land Trust of Virginia  
Annual Meeting  
November 1, 2008  
10:00 AM**

Warrenton-Fauquier Visitor's Center, 33 N. Calhoun Street, Warrenton, VA.

Featured Speaker, Mr. Hank Hartz

Chairman of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation Board of Trustees

Please come to LTV's Annual Meeting, which will be held at the Warrenton-Fauquier Visitor's Center. The Center is located on the grounds of Brentmoor, the home of Virginia's "Gray Ghost," Col. John S. Mosby, from 1875-1877. The Center is behind Brentmoor (which is at 173 Main Street), and is entered from N. Calhoun St. Brentmoor, an Italianate villa style house, is on the National Register of Historic Places. The house is currently under renovation and will become the site of the John Singleton Mosby Museum. A short tour of the house to view the restoration efforts will be available to LTV members following the meeting.

The featured speaker for the meeting is Mr. Hank Hartz, Chairman of the Board of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. The Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) takes conservation easements for the state of Virginia. The Land Trust of Virginia works with VOF to accomplish these goals.



The Land Trust of Virginia holds a Conservation Easement on this beautiful farm near Purcellville, Virginia.

Along with his volunteer Board work with VOF, Mr. Hartz is the owner of a local garden center/landscape design firm and he serves as a member of the Horticulture Advisory Board at J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College.

LTV members will also have the opportunity to meet LTV's new Executive Director, Don Owen, and hear his thoughts on his first 6 months working with LTV. LTV's Stewardship Coordinator, Ashton Cole, will also be at the meeting, available to answer questions about LTV's Stewardship Program.

There will be an election of new Directors for the Board and a review of the year's accomplishments.

**Yes, I want to support LTV - here's my tax deductible contribution -**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_

(W) \_\_\_\_\_

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Please indicate your membership level:

(membership runs from Jan 1 - Dec 31)

- \$25 Family
- \$250 Advocate
- \$1,000 Guardian
- \$5,000 Protector
- \$100 Defender
- \$500 Supporter
- \$2,000 Steward
- Additional Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form along with your donation to:  
Land Trust of Virginia, Inc.  
P. O. Box 14, Middleburg, VA 20118



### **President's Message**

Turner T. Smith, Jr.

Don Owen, LTV's new Executive Director, has been hard at work this Summer and is now working with 23 landowners on possible conservation easements on over 1804 acres. The current dip in the property development market provides LTV a window of opportunity to make the case for the conservation easement option with many landowners. LTV continues to promote easements in and around small local historical village areas like Union and Rectortown, but is now also being approached about easements in the Shenandoah Valley and as far away as Rockingham County.

Professional stewardship of the almost 9000 acres of conservation easements that LTV has already taken continues to be an LTV priority. Since Ashton Cole was hired last summer as LTV's full time Stewardship Coordinator, he has made on-site monitoring inspections of every LTV easement. Ashton will be visiting owners of eased land on an annual basis to meet them, and to assist them in understanding their easement and in carrying out the easement's protective purposes.

LTV's Garden Party in early June at the home and beautiful gardens of Mr. and Mrs. James Hackman was very well attended and helped LTV raise over \$50,000. Thanks again to the Hackman's!

As they have done for the last several years, members of LTV's Board and staff will bolster their professional skills by attending the national meeting of private land trusts, the Land Trust Alliance's National Rally, being held this year in Pittsburg in mid-September. The Rally gives LTV the opportunity to compare notes with land trusts from across the country.

LTV is among the first 50 private land trusts in the country to be have their applications considered under the Land Trust Alliance's new national accreditation process. Both undergoing the national accreditation process and attending the Land Trust Alliance's Rally each year provide a first rate opportunity for LTV to bench-mark its professional performance against the best in the country.

LTV's Annual Meeting will be held on November 1, 2008, at the Warrenton-Fauquier Visitor Center in Warrenton and all LTV members are invited. We urge you to attend, to meet LTV's Board members and Don Owen

as well as the other members of LTV's staff, and to hear our speaker, Hank Hartz, Board Chairman of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

LTV's Fall Fundraising Campaign is just beginning. LTV's Board has a goal of raising over \$200,000 this Fall to help LTV process the many conservation easements that landowners wish to complete and have on record by year end. Please send in as large a contribution as you can. Our land trust can only be as successful as your help and generous funding make it!



### **Stewardship Corner**

Ashton Cole

The acceptance of conservation easements is obviously a very significant part of the mission of land trusts across the country. Easements provide the legal underpinning for the permanent protection of conservation values on local lands. Conservation easements also represent the beginning of an important relationship between LTV, the landowner, and the local community.

The ongoing responsibility of LTV to steward its easements runs with the land, as does the easement itself. However, in most cases, an easement is only as strong as the land trust that holds the easement and therefore has the permanent stewardship responsibility. I have now been on LTV's staff as Stewardship Coordinator for over a year full-time, during which time I have been visiting LTV's easement properties on a regular basis. This is a practice meant to ensure compliance with the terms of LTV's easements, which were designed by LTV and the original property owner to protect the specific conservation values of each piece of land. It is inevitable, of course, that ownership of eased property will change hands over time. Regardless, LTV will always remain responsible for protecting the conservation values secured by the original easement.

This ongoing stewardship of the land constitutes our commitment to preserving each property's conservation values forever. With staff devoted to stewardship, LTV, along with its donors and supporters, can feel comfortable that quality conservation easements will be properly maintained and defended, with the end goal of enhancing and protecting the natural and historical heritage of our part of Virginia for the benefit of current and future generations.



**Message from the  
Executive Director**  
*Conservation Easements:  
A Tool to Protect Our Land  
for Tomorrow*  
Don Owen

Who would have imagined the changes we’ve seen in the last 30 years? Only three decades ago, Leesburg was a quiet, rural town. Warrenton was the county seat of a thriving agricultural community. You could drive for hours through many parts of the northern Piedmont and the Shenandoah Valley without passing a subdivision, apartment complex, or strip mall. Virtually all of scenic northern Virginia was far removed from the urban reach of Washington, D.C.

Not any more. The landscape of the northern Piedmont and the Shenandoah Valley has changed dramatically in the past 30 years. Loudoun County has been one of the fastest growing counties in the nation, year after year, since the mid-1980s. Fauquier and Clarke have not been far behind, and every county in the northern Piedmont and Shenandoah Valley – from Albermarle to Frederick – has seen its share of development pressure.

I’m not implying that development is bad. It’s not – people need places to live, work, purchase goods, and raise families. But since the 1980s, county and state governments have been overwhelmed by the intensity and pace of development, and as a result, many beautiful farms and forests, scenic rivers, Civil War battlefields, and other significant areas in northern Virginia have been lost forever. As development stretches westward, it is beginning to change the rural character and sense of community in the northern Piedmont and Shenandoah Valley.

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) and private land trusts like the Land Trust of Virginia (LTV) have done yeoman work over the past years. Still, if communities and landowners had been more aware of the potential for protecting their properties with conservation easements 30 years ago, it’s likely that more of the key landscapes of eastern Loudoun County, Fauquier County, and Prince William County could have been saved. Fortunately, for landowners that live to the west, excellent options exist to preserve working farms and forests. One of them is to contact LTV, VOF, or one of several other land trusts in Virginia, and take the necessary steps to place a conservation easement on their property.

The Land Trust of Virginia, VOF, and other land trusts and governmental agencies have helped private landowners protect more than 100,000 acres of land in northern Virginia in perpetuity. In some areas, nearly 75% of the landscape is protected forever. This is a significant deterrent to large-scale residential, commercial, and industrial development, including communication towers and electric transmission powerlines. Not only do these conservation easements declare their owners’ intent to preserve their properties: they provide the legal mechanism to do so. As a result, communities and neighborhoods that actively pursue conservation easements will look much the same in 30 years as they do today.

If you haven’t seriously considered placing your land under conservation easement, I urge you to do so. You can save your land, continue to use it for agricultural or forestry purposes, and – together with your neighbors – preserve your community’s scenic character and way of life for generations to come.





***The Land Trust of Virginia***

***Annual Meeting on November 1, 2008***

***10:00 AM***

***Warrenton-Fauquier Visitors Center,  
33 N. Calhoun Street, Warrenton, VA.***

***Please come and join us in welcoming  
Mr. Hank Hartz,  
Chairman of the Board,  
Virginia Outdoors Foundation,  
as our speaker.***



P. O. Box 14  
Middleburg, Virginia 20118

Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip