



**Keweenaw
LAND TRUST**

*a community partner protecting land, water and quality of life
through conservation, stewardship and education*

NEWS

Volume 11 Number 1

June 2008

Celebrate Our Successes...and help KLT accomplish more!

The KLT's success has given us special places. Places for recreation and fitness. Places for learning and community building. Places honoring our history and natural splendor. The Keweenaw's many protected lands are there for you to discover right now. When you visit lands conserved by KLT and our community partners, engage your senses. Listen to the sounds of our natural world, smell the fragrance of the season, feel the coolness in the shade under our forest canopies or the breeze coming off our Lake Superior. The word "ours" does get it right – these places and the opportunity to experience them belong to all of us. So when you enjoy these places, ponder for a moment that KLT has worked to ensure that they will be there for us and for future generations to visit, experience and enjoy. How many causes can you support where tangible success will be there forever making a difference? Celebrate that success. Venture out. Discover. Experience. Share. Repeat.

So let's take a tour of some of KLT's successes, starting close to the Houghton-Hancock area. First the **Marsin Nature Retreat Center** where a vision has become reality. A diversity of groups now utilize the facility for a wide range of purposes, receiving a gentle message about land and resource conservation as they come together in community. With access to the Portage Waterway, and in a setting conducive to relaxation and contemplation, **Marsin** has much to offer and still more potential. Just across the Portage from **Marsin** is **Churning Rapids** where landowners Sue Ellen Kingsley and Terry Kinzel have welcomed hikers, runners, cyclists, skiers, snowshoers and nature lovers in general to enjoy those trails in all seasons. And not far

from **Churning Rapids** is the **Paavola Wetlands Preserve** that is becoming the nearby escape to nature and outdoor classroom we hoped it would be.



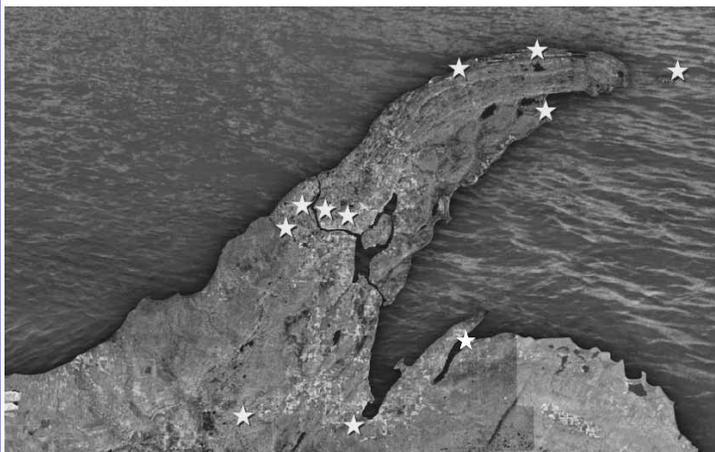
Beaver Lodge in view at the Paavola Wetlands Preserve.

Photo by Jim Belote

Let's head up the Keweenaw Peninsula to the **George Hite Dunes & Marshes Preserve**, another gem to be discovered - Doug Sherk tells of personal experiences at this preserve elsewhere in this newsletter. A bit further up the Peninsula we can scramble on rugged shorelines at the **Joseph & Mary Lizzadro Lakeshore Preserve** near Dan's Point, maybe with Lake Superior's crashing waves to awe us with its raw power and exuberance.

Working our way around the Keweenaw Peninsula, off the eastern tip we find the **Manitou Island Light Station Preserve**. Some dedicated history buffs and adventurers have helped peel back the layers of time and bring the **Light Station's** history to light, to be appreciated by the island's visitors and lighthouse cruise tour groups. Still tracing the Peninsula clockwise, we can enter the timeless and serene world of the **Bete Grise Preserve**, unless we are there when the "Grey Beast" (what "Bete Grise" means in French) awakens with a Lake Superior storm coming in from the east. We join our partner, the Houghton-Keweenaw Conservation District, to work on stewardship and long-term goals of expanding the **Bete Grise Preserve**.

Let's visit the next bay to the east, Huron Bay, where the KLT has been commended by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for our **Lightfoot Bay Coastal Wetlands Preserve** in Baraga County. **Lightfoot Bay** has sand *Continued on page 3*



Our future is in the stars—they show the KLT's project successes so far.

Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative

by Shawn Oppliger, Western UP Center for Science, Mathematics and Environmental Education & Ann Mayo Kiely, Isle Royale Institute



Expanding classrooms. Strengthening communities.

The KLT is partnering on a truly inspiring collaboration underway in the Keweenaw—the **Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative** (LSSI). KLT and more than a dozen community organizations are partnering with the Western Upper Peninsula Center for Science, Mathematics and Environmental Education (Western UP Center) and 11 local schools to prepare K–12 students to become knowledgeable citizens, concerned about the Great Lakes, and actively engaged in stewardship activities that will contribute to the recovery, restoration, and future protection of the Great Lakes and their watersheds. The initiative provides sustained professional development for teachers, make grants to schools, assist with stewardship projects, and facilitates school-community collaborations and public forums. The cooperating organizations that made the \$200,000 grant possible are the Western UP Center and the **Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative** (GLSI) funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Trust with additional funding from the Wege Foundation, and several community foundations.

Evan McDonald and several board members have been engaged in planning and implementing LSSI since its initial proposal development last summer. We've been able to provide guidance on identifying and addressing critical stewardship issues in the watershed, as well as facilitating crucial links between schools and community groups. Right now four schools are working with KLT to develop LSSI projects at the Marsin, Paavala Wetlands and Lightfoot Bay preserves. In upcoming years school groups will be assisting us with biodiversity inventories, trail work, and public education efforts, among other proposals. Perhaps the greatest benefit of this initiative will be the long-lasting impacts of connecting local teachers, students, families, and communities to the rich cultural and natural heritage of the Keweenaw and Lake Superior watershed, connections that will inspire life-long stewardship.

The planning participants identified these Lake Superior watershed stewardship needs: Water quality monitoring and protection; Stream restoration and enhancement; Invasive species control; Effective urban planning; Maintaining unspoiled tracts of open, public space; Wetlands protection and restoration; Protecting and restoring declining fish and mammal populations; and Prevention of contamination that leads to fish consumption advisories. Planners also identified public apathy and the lack of broad citizen engagement in the decision-making process as perhaps the greatest threat to our lakes.

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Jim Rivard, with the Michigan Technological University Department of Forestry and Environmental Science, quizzing students from E.B. Holman school about tree identification at the Marsin Preserve as part of an LSSI orientation. *Photo by Evan McDonald*

For a complete list of participating schools and community partners and for more information about the LSSI, visit www.wupcenter.mtu.edu/lssi. For more information about the GLSI, visit www.glstewardship.org.

Successes *continued from page 1*

bars, dunes and swales, coastal marshes and pine forests that have all been successfully conserved.

Our community is also reaping the rewards of KLT's steady effort and commitment in support of education and stewardship. KLT played an active role in helping establish the Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative (LSSI) in our region to involve teacher-student teams from area schools with stewardship projects to benefit our community and the health of the Lake Superior watershed. The KLT has offered its preserves and human resources to provide opportunities for place-based service learning projects for area schools. Recently a trail building workshop was held at Paavola, and student projects are in development for the Paavola Preserve and Boston Pond as part of the LSSI. As another example, hundreds of area K-12 students will participate in BHK - Child Development sponsored *Great Explorations* events at *Marsin* this summer.

The KLT provides an enriching and essential community service. Our land protection projects provide wildlife habitat, sustain healthy watersheds, and protect cultural and historic resources. This all happens as a cooperative relationship with landowners who share these goals, and is made possible by community support. If you have supported KLT in any way, then *you* have made these successes possible. Can we do more? Of course - with more support we can do more. But just as we all feel the pinch of higher costs of fuel, utilities, and living expenses, costs for KLT's work are increasing too. We do all we can to be efficient with our financial resources, but we will need increasing support to accomplish more. Additional projects are in the works, and even more are planned. **Celebrate our successes and support KLT ~ together we can do more!**



A painted turtle enjoying life at the Lightfoot Bay Preserve.
Photo by Alan Toczydlowski

Visit our website to learn about these projects and our conservation, stewardship and education programs, as well as the latest news and event announcements: **www.KeweenawLandTrust.org**

More to the Dunes & Marshes Preserve Story

By Doug Sherk

I first hiked across what is now the George Hite Dunes & Marshes Preserve on a fall hunting trip with friends in the late 1960s and I now live very close by. I think I have crawled and walked over most of it many times over by now. I don't hunt as much as I used to, except for wild mushrooms, but the George Hite Dunes & Marshes remains my most favorite place on earth. I can continue enjoying it because of one individual's love for the land.



A great view of Great Sand Bay and the George Hite Dunes and Marshes Preserve from the air. *Photo by Mark Roberts.*

I'll never forget what George Hite did one evening at an Eagle Harbor Township Board meeting. A grant match was needed to buy and protect the dunes and marshes on the shore of Lake Superior and no match funds were available. George stood up at the meeting and said, "Go ahead - you will have your funds" and he personally made that happen for us. The parcel is now owned by Eagle Harbor Township and protected for posterity with a conservation easement held by the KLT.

George grew up in Eagle Harbor and still lives there. He's photographed and written engagingly about his adventures and love of the township, its special places and its special people. You can enjoy his ruminations at George's Eagle Harbor website at <http://www.eagleharborweb.net/index.htm> and you can enjoy a very pleasant outdoor experience on a somewhat hilly walk on the George Hite Dunes and Marshes Preserve.

Access it from the Michigan Nature Association's Redwyn Dunes Nature Sanctuary marked trail head on the east side of M-26 right in the dunes along the Great Sand Bay.

The east part of the trail traverses a part of the 360 acres in the George Hite Dunes and Marshes Preserve and includes the high spot looking way north to the top of The Nature Conservancy's preserve on Mt. Baldy (Lookout Mountain) near Eagle Harbor.



Nancy and Doug Sherk at the Preserve.

Light Station Progress *by Joe Kaplan*



The author, ever-serious, orienting the work team.

Photo by Mark Hovel

For the first time in nine months a team made it back to Manitou to work on the Light Station. A trip last fall had to be canceled due to a week of strong winds. The light station fared well since our last visit, sustaining only minor storm damage to the roof of the Light Keeper's building (11 lost shingles) and a better-than-average bludgeoning of the dock by Lake Superior. Both were patched during our stay.



Evan McDonald, Mark Hovel, Chris Williams and Joe Kaplan celebrate their success with the kitchen. *Photo by Chris Williams*

Our trip's main objective was to remove the 1950's vinyl floor tiles covering every inch of the 1900 square foot Light Keeper's Building. Besides giving the historic building an inappropriate "institutional" look the flooring trapped moisture, the bane of historic structures. The results of our work were stunning. The underlying maple flooring is in surprisingly good condition and two brick chimneys exhumed behind drywall revealed some of the building's original 1862 character - finally this 146 year old structure is starting to show its age! With the flooring task now behind us, the rest of this season at Manitou will focus on re-filling the dock cribs, repairing an eroded sea wall, repairing the tower walkway, and replacing the upper security panels. Our next trip to Manitou is planned for early July when Audubon conducts breeding bird surveys.

Looking ahead at Phase II of Manitou's revival, the 50+ year-old Light Keeper's roof comes into focus. Well beyond its service life, this critical building component needs attention before Lake Superior's often tumultuous mood creates a serious problem for us. With 2 to 1 matching funds available through the Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program, KLT's Manitou program needs to raise just over \$8,000 to cover our share of the estimated \$25,000 price tag of a new roof. If you would like to support the preservation of this beautiful KLT property without climbing the roof yourself, please consider donating to the Manitou Island Light Station Preserve Fund and help protect this important historic site.

Manitou Work Crew—May 2008: *by Chris Williams*

On May 30th Joe Kaplan led Evan McDonald, Mark Hovel, and me to Manitou Island for some good hard work on the historic light keepers residence. We disembarked from Copper Harbor on a rainy, foggy morning eager for a spring adventure. It was my first trip to the island and upon arrival I knew it wouldn't be my last. Manitou Island kept itself hidden in the fog until we were nearly at the dock - only briefly appearing between rolling fog, rain, and mist. Although it was cold and rainy, we were all excited about being where we were. We unpacked the boat



Tip of the Keweenaw in view from the lantern room. *Photo by the author.*

quickly and started the trek from the dock to the light station, treading a rocky moss-covered trail under a lichen-draped canopy of trees. We soon encountered tree fall from winter and spring storms but made our way over and under as best we could, all the while knowing our first task once we dropped our gear would be trail detail.

As we approached the light station grounds the rain lifted and the fog began to clear. My first view of the lighthouse couldn't have been more appropriate, a red-capped beacon of light in a sky of fog. I was excited to see the inside of the buildings and hear the history of this magnificent place. Joe led us on a tour and told us the history of the structures and I was more eager than ever to get working.

We spent the next 4 days as a team, working hard to expose the hardwood flooring in the rooms and hallways. We patched a hole in the roof, removed damaged dry-wall, and completely gutted one room that had severe water damage. The entire time the crew was like a well-oiled machine, chugging along all day, making constant progress. Although days were filled with good old-fashioned hard work, our nights were filled with camaraderie and fun. We cooked dinner together, laughing and telling stories. We may have arrived on the island in the rain as four individuals, but we left under the warmth of the sun as four friends who had just shared an adventure!



Chris relaxing after dinner by the Station's sea wall. *Photo by Evan McDonald*

Welcoming An Artist And A Friend Of The Land



I am an artist from Iowa. My name is Randy Richmond.

My photography exhibit, "The Changing Landscape" can be seen at the Copper Country Community Art Center in June, and is inspired by the beauty and history of the Keweenaw Peninsula.

For over twenty years my inspiration has come from the natural world. Combining art and land protection has become both a responsibility and an honor for me; combining the important work of the Keweenaw Land Trust and the dedication of the Copper Country Community Art Center (CCCAC) is my way of showing appreciation.

Sitting on a dark slab of basalt along the shore of Lake Superior, I feel like I am watching millions of years of geologic change repeat itself before my eyes. References to time surround me: white crystal veins bisecting the cold black rock, immense twisted cedar trunks, hemlock roots jutting from the soil, and the sound of pebbles being tumbled and polished by the waves.

Being raised in the corn and pig state of Iowa exposed me to a very functional, utilitarian landscape. Time was measured by the seasons and the land reflected change imposed on it by man. When I came to the Keweenaw for the first time I felt a vibration that started in my fingertips and traveled down my spine to my toes. I felt gravity in a way that was new to me. I felt inspired to create.

During this exhibit, I will be teaching two digital art workshops for children under the age of 17. The workshops will be sponsored by the CCCAC and held at the KLT's Marsin Nature Retreat Center where the idea is to provide young people with a natural experience prior to turning on a computer.

I look forward to meeting you at the closing reception for "The Changing Landscape" to be held on Friday, June 27th from 6:00—8:00pm. Twenty percent of the sales from the exhibit will be donated to KLT and the art is shown unframed in an effort to provide framing revenue to area businesses. Contact the CCCAC for more information about the youth art workshop and the exhibit: 906-482-2333.

Randy Richmond

READING THE LANDSCAPE OF THE KEWEENAW SUMMER 2008

Art and Natural History Field Trips for Adults

Changes in the Land

"Nothing endures but change." Hericlitus

JUNE 28 PHENOLOGY—what happens when and why (9:30 AM - 2:30 PM)

Visit Mount Baldy with conservation biologist David Flaspohler, ecologist Erik Lilleskov, and photographer Randy Richmond to learn about the timing of natural events.

JULY 12 SHIFTING SANDS—examining the unnatural and natural history of stamp sands (9:30 AM - 2:30 PM)

Visit the historic Central mine site with artist Linden Dahlstrom, Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District board member Gina Nicholas, and remediation experts from the Stamp Sand Stabilization Project to discover what effect past mining over a century ago still has on land and water.

JULY 19 —REVISED LANDSCAPES AND HOME GROUNDS (9:30 AM - 2:30 PM)

Explore Paavola Wetlands and Boston Pond with nature writer Michael Moore and environmental engineer Heather Wright. They will lead participants on a nature walk and writing workshop, including discussions along the way of the kinds and causes of environmental change, some natural, some human-made, in these local ecologies.

AUG 9 SHAPING SUCCESSION—visiting private lands restored (9:30 AM - 2:30 PM)

Visit private lands that are models of forest and wetland restoration. Join artist Joyce Koskenmaki and two Chassell landowners to see positive changes people made on their own property to attract wildlife and revive the landscape.

For a complete program description, registration information including driving directions, visit www.KeweenawLandTrust.org or call 906-482-0820.



"Sublimation"—by Randy Richmond. To see more of Randy's stunning artwork visit <http://www.otherography.moonfruit.com/>

Notes from KLT Executive Director Evan McDonald The Conservation Conversation

Back in grade school, I had writing assignments that involved creating dialogue. I enjoyed that writing, especially when it was a conversation between just two people - maybe because that is the most basic and sometimes critical way that effective communication happens...or doesn't. In real life we all know the frustration of miscommunication, misunderstanding and the struggle to find a way of explaining something.

Explaining what KLT is about is an ongoing need for the organization. We need community support and effective partnerships. We need landowners to understand our mission and approach. We need to get our message right to gain that support. The truth is we have board members and long-term volunteers - people who support our mission and see the value of our efforts - who, when asked by people unfamiliar with KLT, have trouble explaining it. They feel at a loss for a simple way to describe our conservation program. These are people that have rolled up their sleeves and are contributing to land conservation successes and even *they* have trouble talking about what KLT does.

Let's not lose the forest for the trees. Yes, the nitty-gritty can get complicated. A conservation easement can be challenging to explain, for example, if you were to start with that topic. So let's not start there. Think big picture. Imagine a dialogue that starts with a simple question that has been often asked.

Neighbor: "What does KLT do?"

KLT Member: "KLT supports land stewardship in keeping with community values."

Neighbor: "What do you mean by land stewardship?"

KLT Member: "Land stewardship is taking care of the land so it will be healthy and valuable to others into the future."

Neighbor: "What community values are you talking about?"

KLT Member: "Respecting our local culture and historic land uses. Promoting public access to special places. Protecting the scenic beauty of the landscape. Preserving wildlife habitat and healthy watersheds. We help landowners take care of their land and raise community awareness to protect the Copper Country we know and love."

Neighbor: "Why would you want to do this?"

KLT Member: "It feels good. Taking care of the Keeweenaw makes me feel good about myself and this place. Keeping the Copper Country special will also be good for our local economy. It's something the community can come together about...as common ground."

Neighbor: "So how do you do all this?"

KLT Member: "Well, KLT acquires land outright to create or preserve natural areas for public use. We help landowners understand their property and make good land stewardship decisions. We form partnerships with landowners to establish land protection agreements. These agreements,

called conservation easements, enable the landowner to ensure that the land will have good stewardship into the future, even after they're gone."

Neighbor: "So, when somebody gives KLT a conservation easement on their property does KLT own the land?"

KLT Member: "No. The landowner still owns the land and manages it according to the agreement they establish with KLT."

Neighbor: "Does an easement require public access?"

KLT Member: "No, that's entirely up to the landowner. If you want to know more about conservation easements, visit KLT's website or talk to our staff who deal with the details of easements and how they work."

Neighbor: "Who belongs to KLT? Do you have to be a landowner to join?"

KLT Member: "All kinds of people are KLT supporters and you don't have to be a landowner to be one. You just have to support the mission. In fact, supporting KLT sort of makes you a landowner because you can enjoy the natural areas that KLT has protected...we all benefit from those successes."

Alright, so memorize your lines and be prepared to talk to your friends and neighbors. Actually, you don't really have to *memorize* anything to have straightforward and meaningful conversations with others about conservation. You just have to connect with the simple truths at the heart of it. Start on firm ground, big picture, middle of the forest...*it's about taking care of the land and keeping the Copper Country special*. I need your help to get our message out there. I need you to be a spokesperson for KLT whenever the opportunity presents itself. You have a part to play - break a leg!



Evan on a recent Manitou work trip.

Photo by Chris Williams

The **Land Trust Alliance (LTA)** is the national organization supporting land trusts like KLT. The Alliance is pleased to introduce two newly redesigned resources to help us do our work better and invite more people to become involved in the conservation community - LTA's [new public website](#) and [completely redesigned magazine](#). The LTA website, www.LTA.org, makes it easier to find information, with nice photos and stories to help convey the importance of land conservation to a wider audience. LTA's magazine, previously called *Exchange* is now *Saving Land*. You can borrow this publication and others from our lending library, and *Saving Land* is also shelved at the Portage Library. Please utilize these resources to learn more about the progress and challenges of saving land.

Join the Keweenaw Land Trust—Or Renew Your Membership

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____ please circle: summer - winter - permanent

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I support the mission of the Keweenaw Land Trust. Enclosed are my membership dues:

\$15 - Student \$25 - Basic Member \$50 - Protector \$100 - Guardian \$250 - Steward

I would like to make an additional gift for:

Land Purchase/Memorial Fund \$_____ Purchase land in honor of _____

Manitou Island Light Station Preserve \$_____

Marsin Nature Retreat Center \$_____

KLT General Operations Endowment \$_____

I would like to set up direct deposit to support KLT throughout the year

I would like to be contacted to learn about: -Planned giving; -Conservation easements; -Land donation

******Please help us update our new member database:**

I prefer to receive the KLT newsletter -By mail; -Electronically via Email; or -Both

I would like to receive Email notices about: -Upcoming events; -KLT volunteer work days

My current Email address _____

KLT respects your privacy and confidentiality. We do not sell our lists and we honor requests for anonymity.

**THANK YOU! Dues and contributions are tax deductible. Please mail this form and payment to:
Keweenaw Land Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 750, Houghton MI 49931**

Some thoughts from one of our members:

Sustainability in the Keweenaw *by Michael Moore*

The attention of many communities is currently spent parsing out climate change and global warming: how it happens, how it will affect us, and what we can do about it. Any study related to our collective impact on ecosystems reveals our community's values: what we choose to develop or to conserve, what to act upon, what to change, what to ignore.

My experience working on trails and wetlands remediation in Nicaragua led me to think of sustainability as an expression of a community's creativity and intelligence. It made me wonder about the stories people served by the Keweenaw Land Trust might tell about their relationships to the land here, and their connections to it.

When Rachel Carson wrote in *The Sea Around Us*—in 1952, ten years before *Silent Spring*—that “in our own lifetime we are witnessing a startling alteration of climate”, she had no way of knowing the direction of that alteration and she wondered about the effects of climate changes on birds, fish, glaciers, and our surface waters and land. She imagined the ocean as our “global thermostat.”

Closer to home, and fifty years later, we now know the potential “agents” of climate change—they have names and addresses, according to Paul Hawken. And the range of responses to them have pushed many concepts that were

not long ago considered “alternative” into the mainstream: eating locally and organically; using renewable energy; reducing consumption; carrying your own cloth bag to the grocery store. My own mother can now read about methane gas and composting in *Time* magazine.

What is the Keweenaw's version of the “global thermostat”? The lakes? Our dirt? Traffic? Birds? Snow? Could it be, in part, the stories people tell about living here? Who is drawn to land conservation projects? Who isn't? What are their stories? Not that long ago the people who lived here were already trying to live sustainable lives out of brutal economic necessity and harsh physical conditions. I think the *KLT Newsletter* would be a wonderful forum for stories that reflect the values of our community, and which will undoubtedly point to the kind of future we're about to live.



The author, lower right, building a bridge at the Marsin Preserve with Boy Scouts last fall. Michael Moore teaches writing at Michigan Technological University and Trail Design, ESL, and Poetry in Solentiname, Nicaragua. *Photo by Evan McDonald*



P.O. Box 750
Houghton, MI 49931

info@keweenawlandtrust.org
www.KeweenawLandTrust.org
906-482-0820



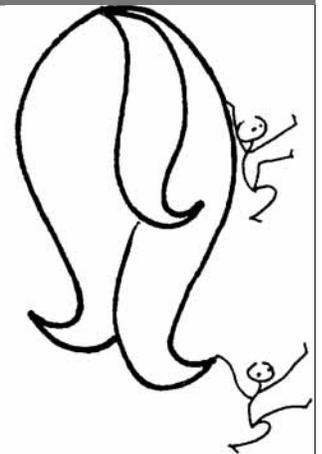
**Please support your local
land trust!**

11th Annual *HORSETAIL SCRAMBLE*

Be sure to join us for this year's HTS. As usual it will be on the **Fourth of July at 1 PM at Churning Rapids**. Those faithful of you know that the HTS is a 5k Trail Walk or 10k Trail Run over woodland trails and along beautiful streams.

This is a major fundraiser for KLT and proceeds this year will go to our Stewardship Endowment Fund. We hope as many of you as possible can join us. Even if you can't join us for the Scramble, please feel free to support the event. All KLT members will receive an entry form in a separate mailing and there will be extras at the run.

The Scramble will be held in conjunction with the **16th Annual Fourth of July** celebration at Churning Rapids (Terry and Sue Ellen's anniversary too!). Scramblers are invited to join the festivities with music, games and feasting following the Scramble. If you stay for the celebration, please bring a place setting and a dish to share; we will supply beverages and corn on the cob and strawberry shortcake. **Be there!**



We Welcome Business Sponsors

Maybe your business would consider a sponsorship contribution for this well-known and popular community event that supports KLT's land stewardship program. If you would like information about becoming a business sponsor for the HorseTail Scramble or other KLT events, please contact the KLT office at 906-482-0820. Thank You!