



NEWS

Volume 19 Number 2 August 2016

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

A Crown Jewel of the Abbaye Peninsula Protected Forever

"It was worth the wait," is the sentiment among Keweenaw Land Trust supporters who have watched in anticipation as the purchase of the coveted 'Parcel B' drew ever closer. A 30-acre property adjoining the Baraga County park land at the tip of Point Abbaye was one of four priority parcels to be acquired by KLT's Abbaye Peninsula & Huron Bay Conservation Initiative. After several years of research, negotiation, fundraising, and most of all, patience, KLT is excited to announce the creation of the Finlander Bay Nature Area!



Not far from KLT's largest nature area, the 1,245-acre Huron Bay field station, the Finlander Bay Nature Area offers some of the best views from the Abbaye Peninsula. With a quarter-mile of cobble shoreline on Lake Superior facing the rugged Huron Mountains and isolated Huron Islands, the nature area will let the public view places from afar that few are able to visit in person. A small rustic camping area lies near the beach, providing water trail paddlers a protected place to pull out their craft for a rest, and land-based adventurers a beautiful location to relax and enjoy the undeveloped shoreline. A pit toilet and fire ring provide some comforts to visitors, with a view of the distant wilderness we can all share.

Towering white pines stand watch over the rocky beach and are visible for miles along Huron Bay. Among their soaring boughs, bald eagles have constructed an impressive home from which they set out on fishing trips in the lake's clear waters. A diverse mixture of cedars, hemlocks, and northern hardwoods make up the rest of the 30-acre parcel, which lies along an important migratory route for many dozens of bird species. This nature area helps protect near-shore habitats that are feeding areas and spawning grounds for the rich Lake Superior fishery.



Funding for this acquisition was provided by a number of sources. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's National Coastal Wetlands Conservation program got the ball rolling in 2014 with a grant administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Grants by the J.A. Woollam Foundation, the Americana Foundation and The Carls Foundation kept up the momentum. Copper Country Audubon and the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition each gave \$10,000 to help meet matching challenges. Bruce Wolck, a dedicated birder and longtime habitat protection advocate, donated \$5,000 to protect the spectacular landscape of the Abbaye Peninsula. L'Anse residents and local conservation champions Deb Stouffer and Ed Kautto also donated \$5,000 to protect this special place.

...continued on page 2

...continued from front page

Many other private donors also gave over the years. To meet the final need for match funds, an anonymous couple made an incredible donation of stock valued at \$40,000. We offer a special thanks to the landowners, Cecile Gitter and John Coumbe, for their patience over the years as KLT worked its way through the acquisition process – they kept the opportunity open for our shared vision of permanent conservation!

The Finlander Bay Nature Area is open to the public for low-impact recreation, including hiking, paddling, bird watching, mushroom picking, fishing, hunting, and snowshoeing. The property can be reached by car – follow Point Abbaye Road for 10 miles, then turn right onto McBeth Road. Please do not drive beyond the open camping area near the shore. KLT will place signs directing you into the nature area later this summer. Use of the camping area is on a first-come, first-served basis. Donations are highly encouraged and users must practice Leave No Trace principles (see page 5.)



Celebrate KLT's 20th Anniversary at the 2016 Annual Meeting

Did you know the Keweenaw Land Trust turned 20 years old in 2016? That's a lot of years dedicated to land conservation in the Western U.P.! You are invited to a celebration of KLT's two decades of success at the 2016 KLT Annual Meeting on September 10th at 3:00 PM. The event will take place at the Ray Kestner Waterfront Park pavilion in Houghton, also known as Chutes & Ladders, in conjunction with the Breakers to Bridge Paddle Fest being organized by the Michigan Tech Outdoor Adventure Program.

KLT members and the public are welcome to join this fun, family-friendly celebration. In addition to a recap of the past year and highlights from KLT's first 20 years, members will vote on new Board of Director nominees and review the organization's financial standing. Additional Breakers to Bridge events will be taking place throughout the day, so the business portion of the meeting will be brief to give you more time to partake in the festivities. Stop by for just the meeting or stick around for all or part of the day - a lot is going on and we'd love to see you there!

When: Saturday September 10th, 2016

Time: 3:00 PM

Where: Ray Kestner Waterfront Park (Chutes & Ladders), Houghton MI

Cost: Free!



In Memory of Local Conservation Heroes

Doug Sherk

Doug Sherk's love for both people and nature was obvious to all who knew him. As a talented medical doctor, elected official, and philanthropist, Doug never ceased to serve the community and higher ideals. Having been on the KLT Board during its early years, Doug returned to the Board in the late 2000s and served as KLT President. Doug played important roles in many conservation successes for KLT and for Eagle Harbor Township, where he lived with his wife Nancy. "Doug was remarkable for being visionary and down to earth," says KLT's Evan McDonald. "He accomplished so much to benefit the community. With Doug's passing, I lost a good friend and so has KLT."

John Michael "Mike" McCarthy

A Hancock native and graduate of Cooley Law School, Mike McCarthy worked briefly in New York before he returned to the Copper Country for his extensive career as a local attorney. Mike provided valuable legal assistance to aid in the formation of the Keweenaw Land Trust back in 1996 and more recently worked on behalf of the four branches of his extended family to donate land held in trust to the KLT to establish the Steve Farm Nature Area at Lovell Creek in 2013. This legacy gift will outlast us all, and Mike will be fondly remembered by family, friends and the many he served during his tenure on this planet.

A Matter of Trust - *Inland Waters* Conservation Expanded at Blue Lake

This story starts with KLT accepting a conservation easement in 2009 to protect 120 acres of forested land encompassing Blue Lake, located about 4 miles southwest of Crystal Falls as part of our *Inland Waters* conservation initiative. The property is a multi-generational family retreat of small cabins tucked into mature forests on top of a high ridge. Located across the lake is a unique calcareous fen at the lake's outflow that forms Armstrong Creek. The easement was donated by Julie Ann Kniskern, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Department at Brandon University in Manitoba. Julie's passion for life-long learning and for the well being of the property is evident on every KLT visit to Blue Lake.

Julie's cousin Nancy Aten and her husband Dan Collins are both ecologists engaged in restoring native landscapes. They were instrumental in developing the conservation approach for Blue Lake and are active stewards of the property. Dan and Nancy make every KLT annual visit to Blue Lake an engaging natural history experience. KLT monitors different parts of easement properties every year and one year noted flagging at the Blue Lake property boundary, which upon further investigation was related to a listed sale of the adjoining property. Within months, Dan and Nancy had purchased that 80 acres, and over the next few years were able to acquire even more land.

It was another good day for Blue Lake when we again visited the beautiful Iron County courthouse to ceremoniously record a second conservation easement over an additional 200 acres, including about a ¼ mile stretch of the upper reaches of Armstrong Creek, with rolling forest land and pockets of low lying wetlands. A 5-acre corner was reserved for a future building site, but the primary focus of this easement is to further protect the Blue Lake and Armstrong Creek watersheds and their native plant communities.

The initial easement not only inspired this second one, but has more fully engaged the four branches of the extended family with roots at the Blue Lake retreat in caring for this land. A Blue Lake Property Trust was recently formed that is now the legal owner of all 320 acres of land under easement and that spells out the long-term vision and responsibility for the property as inspired generations ago by Einar Stefanus and Mary Odelia Lundberg who set down family roots at Blue Lake. Blue Lake was once known as Spirit Lake or *Manido Sagaigon* in Ojibwa and was used as an encampment enroute to sacred burial grounds at Chicagon Lake to the west. The heirs of Einar and Mary continue to honor this special place in trust with their successors and the Keweenaw Land Trust.



Save the Date! Dedication for Abbaye Peninsula & Huron Bay conserved lands

Morning of Tuesday October 11th

Lightfoot Bay Cabins, Skanee

You are invited to attend a dedication of the recently acquired KLT nature areas on the Abbaye Peninsula and Huron Bay. Special guests from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Michigan Department of Natural Resources will be in attendance. Optional guided tours of the properties will be offered, weather permitting. Call or watch for details.

Hungarian Falls Gorge Sheds Half-Ton of Debris

This past June, Michigan Tech hosted the 2016 International Symposium on Society and Resource Management (ISSRM). Over 400 people from around the world attended a variety of informative sessions and speaker series, with several hands-on field trips across the Keweenaw area. KLT hosted more than 30 ISSRM attendees at Hungarian Falls for a sight-seeing tour and volunteer stewardship workday. With nice weather on our side, we had no idea how wildly successful the day would soon become!



Volunteers haul an old futon up and out of the gorge. These guys are made of tough stuff!

The group first learned about Keweenaw Geoheritage and the gorge's unique geology. Then two teams began tackling rubbish, working at a few different locations along the falls. Some worked near the dam with KLT Director Erika Vye to scoop up nails, broken glass, and waste left over from past bonfires in the gathering area, while Nathan took the bulk of the group down the gorge to pull out garbage from below the ATV/snowmobile bridge. Along the way, volunteers took in the beautiful sights and sounds of the river as it cascades its way down the steep valley.

Prior cleanup days had removed much of the debris from below the bridge, but quite a bit of waste that was

difficult to get to was marring this otherwise picturesque location. Despite tough conditions and muggy weather, the volunteers scraped, picked, and muscled out 840 POUNDS of junk in about an hour! Old lawn mower parts, computers, glass, and a moldy, water-logged, rusty futon all were removed from the stream, as well as over a dozen other garbage bags full of trash. Wow! When a site loved by the public is kept clean, would-be litterers get the idea and hopefully learn to take their trash where it belongs.



Part of the ISSRM crew with their newly-found treasure.

We could not have made such an impact in such a short period of time without the help of these stellar volunteers, most only visiting the area for a few days. Their dedication to restoring our shared special places to their former glory cannot be understated. Thanks ISSRM team!



Conservation Crew Logs Hours at the Pilgrim River Watershed Project

The Great Lakes Conservation Corps (GLCC) stopped by the Pilgrim River Watershed Project this August to put in a day's work for a good cause. Along with Nathan and Evan from KLT and landowner Joe Hovel and his son Mark, the crew removed invasive buckthorn, picked up dumped trash, and cleared about half the length of trail at the Pilgrim Community Forest. Many thanks to Jeff Pingel, David Failing, Ben Schmidt, and Alex Enlinger for visiting our area! The Superior Watershed Partnership coordinates the GLCC program and receives financial support from the Ottawa National Forest to assist with community based environmental projects throughout the Upper Peninsula, ranging from trail construction to habitat restoration.

Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers Visit the Keweenaw

With help from the Subaru Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers, the Boston Pond Nature Area is a little healthier. Traveling Trainers Amanda Neiman and Greg Smith stopped by the Keweenaw for nearly a week in early-July to participate in a few different events. Their first stop was Michigan Tech's Outdoor Adventure Program, where they led a Trainer Course to coach outdoor leaders on how to teach people to follow Leave No Trace ethics in their own communities. KLT Project Coordinator Nathan attended the 2-day training and is now a certified Leave No Trace Trainer – watch for more Leave No Trace outreach events soon!

Following the Trainer Course, Amanda and Greg teamed up with KLT for an Awareness Event and cleanup at the Boston Pond Nature Area. Ten community volunteers joined the Saturday morning event to help out, an excellent number for the workload we anticipated. After a brief overview of the 7 Leave No Trace principles, the team got started on removing some buried trash and debris from near the Boston Pond boardwalk. A little digging uncovered untold “treasure,” as Greg called it, and soon there was a pile of more than 500 pounds of junk ready for proper disposal. Holy moly! With the decades-old trash now removed, the natural habitats will quickly rebound. Many thanks to all the volunteers that took time out of their day to help keep this public place healthy and beautiful!

The Subaru Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers live and travel in their Subaru, offering free training and outreach in communities across the country. They do all of this while sleeping outside over 250 nights a year! Four teams of two people travel all across the country to communities of all shapes and sizes, from dense urban settings to rural areas like the Keweenaw. The teams generally have a regional focus and spend their summers up north, heading south as the weather cools. KLT is glad to have them visit the area and hope to see them back someday!

Leave No Trace Principles

The Seven Principles of Leave No Trace were developed to educate and guide recreationists in sustainable practices that minimize or avoid recreation-related impacts. While Leave No Trace has its roots in the backcountry, they have been adapted to be applied anywhere - from wilderness, to local parks, to your backyard - and for any and all outdoor recreational activities. Adapt these general Principles to help you reduce your impact on the landscape today!

- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors



Above: Volunteers pose alongside the Leave No Trace Subaru at the Boston Pond Nature Area

Below: Digging up buried “treasure” in the woods.



Annual Membership Drive & Renewal Updates

KLT is revamping its membership program to make the process clearer and to encourage annual membership renewal - the financial lifeblood of the organization. This will help support the general operating fund, which is often overlooked in favor of project-specific funding but which is absolutely critical to our mission success. Please renew your membership for 2017 and encourage your friends, family, and colleagues to become members! If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out at (906) 482-0820.

Why are we making the switch? To boost our membership, encourage annual renewals, make it easier for KLT to keep track of current members, and to maintain good communications with members. KLT is making the switch to a new member database as part of the membership program improvements.

What does an annual KLT membership cost? \$50/household and \$20/student for the **Supporter** level.

When should I pay my annual dues? Kick off for 2017 membership begins at the Breakers to Bridge Paddle Festival, September 10th, 2016. Annual memberships will expire at end of each calendar year, beginning at end of 2017. That means if you donate after September 10th, 2016, your membership will not expire until December 31st, 2017.

How do I donate? There are a few options. You can 1) fill out the membership form in this newsletter and send in a check, 2) pay online at www.KeweenawLandTrust.org, or 3) attend the Breakers to Bridge event at Kestner Park in Houghton on September 10th and visit our membership drive table. Each fall, look for membership renewal notifications reminding you to update your membership in order to stay current.

Are there any membership perks? Not only does your membership support land conservation, stewardship, and expanding public access to our protected lands in the western Upper Peninsula, you also receive a KLT sticker, regular newsletters, email updates from KLT, and voting rights at the annual meeting. And new this year, we are offering a free one-year gift membership to any new household of your choice when you purchase your own membership. Just include the contact information for the beneficiary household on your payment form. Help us meet our goal of 500 KLT member households!

What if I want to give more? Glad you asked! Sue Ellen Kingsley and Terry Kinzel are matching dollar-for-dollar up to \$10,000 for contributions above the base memberships. So please give generously to help support KLT efforts! KLT relies on your contributions above base membership to sustain the organization, offer events, engage the next generation of land stewards in our local schools, and most importantly, carry on the promise of caring for lands we have conserved *forever*.

Chestnuts Growing Over the Marsin Waters

Kerena Schmidt is on a mission: to reintroduce the American chestnut to the Keweenaw! This past spring, Karena planted a group of four chestnut trees at the Marsin Nature Area as part of an ongoing effort to return these magnificent trees to the landscape. At one time, there were billions of chestnut trees stretching across eastern North America. In the early 1900s, chestnut blight was accidentally introduced to the continent, wiping out nearly all native specimens. Today, the American Chestnut Foundation is leading the charge to develop blight-resistant varieties and introducing American chestnuts to areas that are not affected by the disease. If all goes according to plan, the chestnuts at Marsin and a few other locations in the community will start producing tasty snacks in no time!



Join the KLT as a new or renewing member!

Name _____ Phone# _____
 Address _____ Please Circle: Summer - Winter - Permanent
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Current Email Address _____

I would like to receive email notices about: Upcoming events; General KLT News; Volunteer workdays

Choose your membership giving level:

- \$20 STUDENT Membership
- \$50 Supporter \$100 Guardian \$250 Steward Other \$ _____

_____ I am interested in receiving information about planned giving to support KLT

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

***** New this year: Give a FREE gift membership to a friend or family member! *****

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Thank you for your gift! Dues and contributions are tax deductible. Please mail this form and payment to:
Keweenaw Land Trust, 801 N. Lincoln Drive Suite 306, Hancock MI 49930

Copper TRACES Teaches Students About Landscape History

In May 2016 KLT partnered with the Keweenaw National Historical Park for their Every Kid in a Park event, Copper TRACES, which invited 400 4th graders from Houghton, Baraga, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon County schools to the Park's Calumet unit for two days of learning and fun. The event had stations with topics including Technology, Research, Art, Community, Environment, and Service (TRACES). Each of these station topics is vital to understanding the lasting traces of the copper industry in the Keweenaw. A variety of community partners hosted activities, from the Copper Country Firefighters Museum to a foundry demonstration and everything in between.

KLT's station asked students to think about their ideal community. Where would students like to live, work, and play? Are these uses compatible with the needs of plants and animals? Students then had to build their community on a map, a sort of Sim City in real life. Most of the students designed sustainable, attractive regions that made Nathan proud. Only a few thought wetlands and playgrounds were compatible uses – maybe they were thinking of Paavola Wetlands! The event was a success, though a torrential downpour on the afternoon of the second day made for some very soggy learning. At least it wasn't snow!

Central Houghton Greenspace Expands On Mason Nature Area

This spring brought the exciting achievement of a vision set out long ago by the late Marilyn Mason. In 2011, Marilyn bequeathed KLT several rugged lots in the City of Houghton that became the Mason Nature Area. Along with the land, Marilyn also donated funds to the Copper Country Audubon to help further benefit the Mason Nature Area and bird habitat in the region. This money was used to help match a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant submitted by the City of Houghton to purchase land adjacent to the Mason Nature Area. In May the project success was celebrated with the dedication of the Central Houghton Greenspace, a 4-acre nature area that resembles Isle Royale transplanted to the heart of Houghton. The project would not have been possible without the help of the landowners, Greta and Bill Gappy (photo above), who held out developing this block for a conservation outcome to benefit our community. The marked trail on the Mason Nature Area will be expanded through the new Greenspace in the coming months.





801 N. Lincoln Drive, Suite 306
Hancock, MI 49930

(906) 482-0820

info@KeweenawLandTrust.org

www.facebook.com/KeweenawLandTrust

www.KeweenawLandTrust.org



Breakers to Bridge Paddle Festival Coming to a Portage Waterway Near You!

Are you looking for an exciting, scenic, and one-of-a-kind adventure in the Keweenaw? Look no further than the **Breakers to Bridge Paddle Festival!** The event celebrates two big anniversaries: Michigan Tech Outdoor Adventure Program's 10th year and the Keweenaw Land Trust's 20th! The action and fun takes place on the weekend of September 9-11 and we hope you can attend.

The event highlight is a 10-mile paddle starting at the Keweenaw Waterway's north entry (Breakers) and going all the way to the Portage Lake Lift Bridge. The paddle includes non-competitive and competitive divisions for both solo and tandem paddlers. KLT's Marsin Nature Retreat serves as a rest stop and aid station for the paddlers at mile 4, with the next stop offered at Hancock Beach at mile 8. From there, it's a final sprint to the Lift Bridge and the grand celebration that awaits!

In addition to the 10-mile paddle, several other activities are planned throughout the weekend. Space is limited for all paddle events. More information and registration is available online at www.breakersbridge.com. Cost for the 10-mile paddle is \$35/solo and \$55/tandem. Additional merchandise is available online, such as hats, t-shirts, water bottles, stickers, and more. A portion of the event's proceeds will go towards supporting KLT's mission work that includes expanding water access for public use.

Friday, September 9, 2016 (Continental Fire Co.)

4:00-8:00PM: Check in & Bib Pickup

5:00-7:00PM: Course talks on the hour every hour

6:00-9:00PM: 5Point Film Festival

Saturday, September 10, 2016 (Locations as Noted)

7:00AM-10:00AM: Race Check in & Bib Pickup
(Breakers)

10:00AM-4:00PM: Breakers to Bridge Paddle Race

1:00PM-8:00PM: Music & Food at the finish area
(Kestner Park)

5:00PM-7:00PM: Silent Auction (Kestner Park)

7:00PM: Awards Ceremony and Recognition

Sunday, September 11, 2016 (Locations Throughout the Keweenaw)

Clinics, Paddles, Demos (9:00AM-Noon)

Sailing Demos

Beginner Kayak Skills Clinic

Paddle Roll Clinic

Glasswater Sturgeon River Paddle

The Portage Historical Paddle

Visit www.breakersbridge.com for details/updates.