

# Keweenaw Land Trust

# NEWS

*a community partner dedicated to preserving the quality of life in the Keweenaw through land conservation*

Volume 5 Number 2

December 2002

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- ✓ KLT Board of Directors meets every third Monday of each month, 7 P.M., MTU School of Business
- ✓ December 31—the last day to make tax deductible charitable contributions for tax year 2002

## Inside this issue:

President's Message	2
KLT Board of Directors	2
Meet the Board	3
A Celebration with Peter Forbes	4
In Memoriam: Robert Thorson Brown	6
Wanted: Land Stewards	6
Land Management & Operations Report	7
Membership form	8

# KLT: Growing and Protecting

## LTA Midwest Awards KLT \$15,000 to Hire Executive Director

The Land Trust Alliance Midwest has awarded KLT a \$15,000 grant to hire our first Executive Director and open a KLT office in 2003. The award is from The Great Lakes Advancement Grants Program, which is supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. This is the second year KLT was funded by this program. Our 2001 \$5000 organizational development grant positioned us to succeed again this year.



*Ice Forms on Portage Lake*

Because this is a matching grant, there is one catch: KLT must quickly raise an additional \$15,000 in matching funds (see accompanying Staff Development article). This is a critical time for the unique and threatened lands of the Keweenaw, so if there was ever a time to dig into your pockets and support KLT, this is it.

KLT has reached a critical point in its development . The demands of the tasks

*(Continued on page 3)*

## KLT Recommended for Two DEQ Coastal Restoration Grants

The Michigan DEQ's Coastal Management Program has recommended two projects for Great Lakes Coastal Restoration Grant funding. The first is \$443,000 for acquisition of the Swedetown Creek Nature

Corridor in Hancock, and the second is \$258,700 for acquisition of Dan's Point in Keweenaw County. KLT partnered with the City of Hancock and the Keweenaw Nordic Ski Club on the Swedetown Creek project and with the Houghton Keweenaw

Conservation District (HKCD) on the Dan's Point project. These acquisitions will protect the properties in perpetuity with conservation easements. These projects competed against \$25 million in grant requests from across the state for \$7 million in funding. The recommendations have been forwarded to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the federal granting agency, for final review.

*(Continued on page 3)*



## KLT Board of Directors 2002-2003

Christa Walck, President  
Houghton  
482-5019  
cwalck@mtu.edu

Emily Fiala, Vice President  
Hancock  
482-8920  
fiala@portup.com

Mark Roberts, Secretary  
Hancock  
482-3092  
mroberts@mtu.edu

Steve Albee, Treasurer  
Hancock  
482-2615  
salbee@up.net

Sandra Harting  
Pelkie  
487-2115  
sihartin@mtu.edu

Mark Gleason  
Houghton  
487-1980  
gleason@mtu.edu

Joe Kaplan  
Hancock  
487-5647  
jdkaplan@mut.edu

Terry Kinzel  
Hancock  
482-6827  
tkinzel@pasty.com

Valorie Troesch  
Dollar Bay  
482-4041  
vtroesch@mtu.edu

# A Message from KLT President

I hope that you read this edition of the KLT newsletter from cover to cover. We have been very busy over the past year strengthening KLT as an organization, and preparing it for a larger role in our community and in the land trust movement. Our efforts have been rewarded over the past month with unbelievable success. The LTA grant to hire our first Executive Director comes none too soon—our plate is getting very full. We already have several conservation easements underway, and the DEQ grants to acquire Swedetown Creek and Dan's Point add more to our plate. We need to keep building our partnerships locally and regionally, because there is strength in partnership.

These grants present incredible opportunities that we never dreamed would happen so quickly—but they also present challenges. The first challenge is financial—we have to raise \$25,000 not only in the coming year, but in every year thereafter if we are going to retain a paid staff person to provide the consistent, constant presence in the community which KLT needs to achieve its mission. If you believe in our mission of protecting the quality of life in the Keweenaw through land conservation, this is the time to pony up. There may never be a better time than now to protect land.

The second challenge is to keep our eye on the ball. We have accomplished an enormous amount as an all-volunteer organization, and as someone who has sat in the President's chair for three years now, I am keenly aware of how much time and energy it now takes to keep up with all of the things we have put into motion. And there is so much more to do. We need the continuous inspiration of people like Peter Forbes to keep us moving and keep us focused—if you didn't get to hear him talk, read his book, and stay tuned for his words and pictures on our website in the near future.

The final challenge is outreach, to our members, and to partners. We need to keep our membership involved and growing. A part-time staff person cannot do it all. We need the coordinated assistance of member-volunteers who are willing to commit time and energy, as well as dollars, to KLT. And we need to invest time and energy in developing partnerships. If anything, I believe it is the partnerships we built this year that have led to our success—partnering on grants and on outreach, with individual landowners and with organizations.

So as you turn toward the holiday season, and ponder gifts for friends and family, please think of KLT and our mission, and give what you can.

## KLT to Hire Executive Director

*(Continued from page 1)*

ahead of us require the dedicated time of a paid professional staff person. We have accomplished an enormous amount as an all-volunteer organization, but we need an Executive Director who will provide consistency of effort and energy, public visibility, and oversight of KLT initiatives. The new Director will work with the Board and KLT members to implement our land protection strategy, build membership, raise funds, and build our relationships with other organizations and agencies to leverage our assets.

The Board Development Committee will develop a position description and advertise nationally. Our plan is to hire a Director by May 2003. If you want to assist with this process, or know of potential candidates, please contact Committee Chair Emily Fiala.

## Meet the Board: Mark Gleason

New Board member Mark Gleason has been involved in environmental issues for most of his life. He has been involved from the First Earth Day to Michigan's bottle Bill to lobby in Washington DC to working on the Hudson River's Tallship Clearwater. He has been and continues to be active in several state and national environmental groups. While new to this region, he brings an interest in promoting long term protection of our shared resources. He was introduced to this region by visiting Isle Royale National Park where he began as a Park Ranger. At the present time he is employed as the Director of the Isle Royale Institute. The Institute is a partnership between Michigan Tech University, University of Minnesota and the National Park Service. Its mission is to promote education and research at Isle Royale and on the waters of Lake Superior. To accomplish this mission the Institute offers multi-day courses to the park and supports other trips in the region.

## KLT to Partner on Great Lakes Coastal Restoration Grants

*(Continued from page 1)*

Both projects are located in areas designated by KLT for strategic land protection. The Dan's Point project will be KLT's first land protection activity in Keweenaw County.

The Swedetown Creek project will restore and protect 184 acres of pristine natural habitat along the Swedetown Creek waterway. The proposal calls for the City of Hancock to acquire ownership of the creek corridor and KLT to acquire and manage a conservation easement over the entire property. The Keweenaw Nordic Ski Club will assist with restoration and conservation efforts of the area. This project has tremendous significance because it allows KLT to link with the adjoining Kinzel-Kingsley property over which KLT acquired a conservation easement earlier this year. The project requires a 25% local cash or in-kind match.

The Dan's Point acquisition will protect 24 acres and over 600 feet of Lake Superior shoreline near Copper Harbor. The HKCD ([www.hkconserve.com](http://www.hkconserve.com)) will own the property and KLT will hold the conservation easement. The current landowner, KLT member Gina Nicholas, has been seeking a conservation-minded owner for the property for several years, and is generously donating the match for this grant. Tami Anderson, former HKCD Executive Director and new HKCD board member, worked with KLT to procure the grant, and is delighted that this will be the HKCD's first acquisition.

The Keweenaw Land Trust extends its sympathies to long time KLT member  
Chuck Bumleve  
and his family  
of Mohawk, Michigan.  
Chuck's father, Wilson,  
recently passed away.  
Wilson first began visiting the  
Keweenaw in 1919.

We gratefully acknowledge  
a donation from Gina  
Nicholas in memory of Wilson  
Brumleve.

# "Our Land, Ourselves"

## A Weekend Celebration with Peter Forbes

Lake Superior, Brockway Mountain, Quincy Mine, Point Abbey, Churning Rapids, Liminga, Bete Gris, the Montreal, Covered Road, Red Jacket, Centennial -- places that speak of our history, land, culture -- and remind us that where we live is like no other place. Peter Forbes came to the Keweenaw for a weekend not only to encourage and inspire us with his powerful stories, but to experience for himself a landscape that inspires many by its unique alchemy of people, places and land. He came to remind us what a fragile asset the Keweenaw is, and one worth the work it may take to protect.

In his writings, Peter Forbes points out that in communities across the nation people are saying "The world I knew is gone" - a forest, family farm, historic building, beach or other favorite spot. For Peter, the loss of a cherished childhood landscape, the Bull Run Farm which was converted to a suburban tract of homes, gave direction to his life's work.

Peter grew up in an activist family with close connections to the land. He learned from an early age that caring for the land meant caring for something bigger than oneself. His work has taken him around the globe to study, protect and convey the importance of a strong human relationship with the land. Through the success of more than 130 conservation projects, Peter has championed a community-based expression of land conservation with an emphasis on projects which tell stories and hold values. In 1998, he became the Trust for Public Land's first National Fellow, devoting himself to research and writing, and in 2001 founded their Center for Land and People.



Peter arrived Saturday evening, November 8th, in time to enjoy local entertainment at the Little Gem Theater in Lake Linden. This included dancing to those wonderful spoons played by Johnny Perona and learning about our history through the

entertaining stories and music of the Finn Wood Ramblers, folk musicians dedicated to playing the ethnic music of the immigrant groups who settled in Upper Michigan.

On Sunday morning, Frank Fiala of the Keweenaw National Historic Park shared more of our local story with Peter. Together, they toured the area encompassed by the National Historic Park in Houghton and Calumet.

The highlight of the weekend was Peter's address at the Finnish-American Heritage Center on Sunday afternoon. Peter uses the power of stories, much like the tradition of American native storytelling. He used strong emotions to convey lasting impressions of the losses people have suffered through changes to the landscape. And he also tells of the joys of success when people are moved to protect a community landscape they hold dear. He tell stories of a poor community saving Grigg's farm - the last left in their community - from becoming another box store, of the return of the Nez Perce Indians to their native sacred lands, of the transformation of lives on 121<sup>st</sup> Street in Central Harlem in New York City when Classie Parker transformed an empty lot into a Five Star Garden.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Peter Forbes visits the Keweenaw, continued

*(Continued from page 4)*

Peter's masterful storytelling is brought to life through his stunning photographic images and actually move people to tears.

Peter recognizes that our sense of well being depends not only on access to clean, safe places to work, play, fish, hunt or grow food, but also on our sense of connection to special places. Our wealth is not in bank accounts or GNP's, but in stories and memories of people and places in our past and in our daily lives. We derive a sense of well being from seeing our land, not as a commodity, but as our community.

He weaves into his stories the image of a society in which corporate images are more readily recognized than native plants and animals. He tells us about escalating rates of depression and suicide and the connection that these sad facts have to our loss of place. He describes land conversion that becomes a consumer's monoculture. He warns us that protecting places doesn't necessarily protect the culture that has lived on and loved that place. This aspiration for protection is not reached by how many acres or historic sites are saved, but by how much love and respect for the land and our heritage we can engender in the greatest number of people.

On Monday, Peter took his message to Linda Rulison's 7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies students at Hancock Middle School. He was delighted to discover they could name many native plants and animals. Peter told the young students how lucky they are to have such a special place to live. The school visit was particularly significant to Peter because his new research and writing project will focus on children and childhood landscapes. It will describe how children play now compared to throughout history and how the loss of childhood landscapes affects us at any age.

Peter delivered a different message at a luncheon with community business and planning leaders. His message to them was about the importance of honesty, integrity, and dialogue. We must begin from a foundation of what we have in common—to identify what we value and love in our community. From there, we build to maintain a community that is prosperous not just for the people or for the land, but for people and the land in harmony. He acknowledged the struggle we face in trying to sustain a viable economy while also protecting land

and heritage. He assured us that these struggles are universal and are not unique to the Keweenaw. But he also offered valuable ideas and suggestions drawn from successful experiences in communities like ours.

Peter's full schedule continued with an interview with Dick Storm's "Copper Country Today." The interview, which also included KLT President Christa Walck and Frank Fiala, aired on the following Sunday.

KLT was honored to have Peter come to the Keweenaw. It was an exciting and inspirational weekend, and his impact will percolate into the community far beyond the immediate events. Peter is a warm, generous and passionate person with a breadth of experience which he willingly shares. His manner is humble and genuine, making his message all the more real and pertinent. KLT is grateful for support from Keweenaw National Historical Park, Finlandia University, Peter and Patricia VanPelt, Sharon Emley, Don Arkin, and anonymous donors who made Peter Forbe's visit here possible.

If you would like more information about Peter and his work with the Center for Land and People you can visit the Trust for Public Land website at [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org). Several articles Peter has written are posted on this site along with updates on his current work. Peter is the editor of *Our Land, Ourselves*, and the author of *The Great Remembering*, both available at North Wind Books. KLT has placed copies of these books in several of the local libraries. KLT will have copies of the "Copper Country Today" show featuring Peter in our own library, along with a CD-Rom of Peter telling some of his stories, which we may be able to post on the KLT website. If you heard him while he was here, we're certain you will want to hear more.

by Pat Toczydlowski

*Editor's Note: Pat is a former KLT Board Member. She continues to work on behalf of KLT on various projects. KLT extends its appreciation and thanks to Pat for the countless hours she put into making Peter Forbe's visit to the Keweenaw a reality. This project was in the making for nearly one year.*

## In Memoriam: Robert Thorson Brown

Professor Emeritus Robert Thorson Brown, a charter member of KLT, died Sunday, August 25, 2002, of natural causes after a swim in Rabbit Bay. Robert Brown - or just "Bob" to the people who knew him - had an active professional life before retiring from Michigan Technological University in 1983. This activism followed him into retirement. He, along with his wife and constant companion Vi, continued to share this activism until the day he died.

To all those who knew him, Bob was an uncompromising advocate of world peace, a staunch defender of the Earth's environment, and a champion of social justice. Bob was also a good KLT member! He and Vi attended all KLT's annual meetings, horsetail scrambles, and the other special events held over the years. The KLT and the Keweenaw will dearly miss Bob!

Vi and the children, Linda, Cynthia, Lisa and Erik, have selected the Keweenaw Land Trust, Inc. as one of two recipients for memorial gifts in Bob's name, the other is the Michigan Nature Association. The Keweenaw Land Trust, Inc. has established a special Land Purchase Fund with these memorial gifts it receives

## Wanted: Keweenaw Land Stewards!

The Keweenaw Land Trust is always in need of dedicated volunteers to serve as Land Stewards. Land Stewards are the *can-do, hands-on, out in the field, up-close and personal* folks that look after a land trust's preserves and monitor its conservation easements. Property owned and easements held by the trust are termed "projects", because each requires active management. A volunteer commitment as an active Land Steward can demonstrate support for KLT as well as a long-term commitment to care for the land of the Keweenaw.

Sound interesting? The duties of a land steward are not overwhelming, and can be fun and educational as well. A land steward meets and works with land owners, promotes good relations with neighbors, may need to check boundaries, explore the possibility of expanding preserves, check for easement violations, and various other activities. In some cases, trails need to be laid out or maintained, wildlife and plants cataloged, and birdhouses or signs put up. All the while a steward will be fulfilling KLT's commitment to land stewardship in the community.

The Keweenaw Land Trust, Inc., now in full operation as a non-profit land protection organization, has three preserves and two large conservation easements that require active management. There is the Six-Mile Creek Preserve, a 200 acre piece of rugged land tucked into the area at the head of Keweenaw Bay in Baraga County. A second preserve is the Paavola Wetlands north of Hancock, with 40 acres adjacent to the U.S. Hwy. 41 heritage corridor, between the Quincy and Calumet Units of the Keweenaw National Historical Park. Our third and newest preserve, the

Marsin Conservancy, contains 40 acres next to the Red Brick Road, off the Houghton Canal Road near Oskar Bay.

KLT's two major conservation easements include the Simi Working Forest Easement near Nisula, and the Kingsley-Kinzel Working Forest and Recreation Easement near Hancock. Several others are in the process of being developed. Monitoring conservation easements, as a general rule, requires an annual inspection and an interview with the landowner—both critical steps that reduce possible infractions to the covenants contained in the easement. Preserves on the other hand may require oversight throughout the year—more time and commitment, sure, but also more satisfaction for the steward who actively oversees management of a KLT property.

KLT's Land Management & Operations (LM&O) Committee would like to recruit, at a minimum, one Land Steward for each preserve and easement held; a team of two would be ideal. Persons interested in monitoring conservation easements would be teamed with a member of the LM&O Committee to start out. All volunteers would become part of the LM&O Committee and hours spent would count as in-kind contributions to the trust, which KLT relies on for member support beyond annual dues.

Still sound interesting? If the answer is yes, contact the chair of the Land Management & Operations Committee, Steve Albee at (906) 482-2615 or <salbee@up.net>, or drop a line to the Keweenaw Land Trust, P.O. Box 750, Houghton, MI 49931.

# Land Management & Operations Committee Report

Since the committee's last report to you in the May newsletter, your happy band of volunteers is looking back on an active summer. The three potential conservation easements (CE's), on which we had reported and received letters of intent for donation to KLT, are still in the development process. The Board of Directors has given each of them a preliminary letter of approval to accept an easement from each of the owners.

However, as the saying goes, "the Devil is in the details!" Each property owner has his or her own set of objectives that need to be dealt with in their individual CE's. The CE's are not only complex, but many of the details have to be incorporated into a baseline document, which KLT requires to be prepared for each property. There are other complications. In one case, for example, there is a question of just where a property line is located. All the questions and issues have to be worked out, which makes the procedure time consuming, tedious, and always challenging.

We describe some of the details in the CE acquisition procedure - not to discourage any property owner from pursuing a CE— but rather to emphasize how individualistically the result is meant to be tailored. A comparable metaphor would be that of a person choosing a wedding dress or a suit of clothing off the rack, as opposed to having a dressmaker or tailor take one's measurements and then make the item. Let me just conclude this topic by saying the three CEs are in the works and are progressing!

Regarding KLT preserves: The Paavola Wetlands has been seeing some foot traffic on the nature trail established last year by Eagle Scout Willie Lewis and the scouts from Troop 208. While there is no trail counter, the foot traffic has kept the foliage in check. A good indication of use. Willie remarked the trail early this spring, which was a big help for first time users. During the summer and autumn, Bob Janke and Steve Albee made several reconnaissance trips to locate other routes to help expand the trail system through the preserve.

The Marsin Conservancy, KLT's newest preserve, saw a number of improvements. A new road culvert was installed in conjunction with the construction of a small parking area in the northwest corner of the preserve. This conforms to the management plan requested by Mary Sinish before donating the property to KLT. Greg Kudray staked out a route for a nature trail on a portion of the preserve. Mark Roberts is working with another Boy Scout from Troop 208, who wants to develop this trail for his Eagle Project.

The Simi Conservation Easement, KLT's first CE, was inspected and monitored for the second time this past August. Steve Albee and Salvadora Keith made the trip to Nisula in early August. Janet and Erwin Simi were as always hospitable and helpful. During the inspection, the subject of a possible prescribed burn on the current pasture lands was discussed. This activity is under consideration for some time in early spring of 2003.

Briefly, several other items are now under advisement by the LM&O committee. Item one is the proposed land sale of the Kamehameha Schools Trust lands. These lands encompass over 300,000 acres in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. More than 26,000 acres are in Houghton County. Norma Boersma did some research on this topic for presentation to the Board. At the direction of the KLT Board, The Nature Conservancy, a major player in the negotiations along with the state of Michigan, was contacted and offering its support to KLT in protecting these lands.

Item two involves Jill Fisher and Pat Toczdlowski who are currently working on developing a common sign design for eventual placement on our preserves. What they are considering includes materials, cost, shape, color, and wording. The goal is to produce a sign made out of materials that are durable, of relatively low cost and low maintenance, and carry a message that easily identifies KLT and its mission. An example might be: Paavola Wetlands Preserve - Under the Protection of Keweenaw Land Trust.

Item three and the last topic for your consideration involves the partnerships KLT has established with the City of Hancock and the Houghton-Keweenaw Conservation District which focus on protecting Great Lakes coastal areas. The specific areas include the Swedetown Creek Gorge in the City of Hancock, and a parcel on Dan's Point in Keweenaw County. Acquisition of these areas will be made possible through a one-time appropriation through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's coastal management program is administering the application process. KLT board members Valorie Troesch and Christa Walck, who are tracking the project applications, report that both applications are still under consideration. No date has been given when a final decision can be expected.

Submitted by Steve Albee  
Land Management & Operations  
Committee Chair

**KEWEENAW LAND TRUST**

P.O. Box 750  
Houghton, MI 49931

Email: cwalck@mtu.edu

Paste Mailing Address Label Here

**Join the Keweenaw Land Trust—Renew Membership**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

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

- \$20 Basic Member
- \$50 Protector
- \$100 Guardian
- \$250 Steward
- \$1000 Conservator

- I would like someone to contact me with further information.
- I would like to consider donating land or a conservation easement.
- Please send an acknowledgment.
- Please send information on Planned Giving.

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