



A community partner protecting land, water, and quality of life through conservation, stewardship and nature connections

NEWS

Volume 26 - November 2023

Leaving a Legacy: four stories unfold

Announcing the Departure of Evan McDonald, our first Executive Director

With heartfelt gratitude we announce the departure of our Executive Director Evan McDonald, effective December 2023.

Over his 20- year tenure with Keweenaw Land Trust, Evan has left an outstanding legacy, enriching our organization and the community. His vision has helped KLT become an accomplished conservation organization, with more than 8,000 acres of land with almost 10 miles of shoreline under permanent protection across six western counties of the Upper Peninsula. **Under Evan's leadership, KLT has expanded staffing, strengthened its policy governance model, and moved into a permanent office on Quincy Hill** (see story on page 6).



Evan shortly after arriving in fall of 2003. Read his farewell remarks beginning on page 2.

We are delighted to announce that KLT Project Specialist Pat Toczydlowski has agreed to serve as interim Executive Director. Pat has been with KLT since its founding in 1996, and she has a solid understanding of KLT's operations and the full support of the

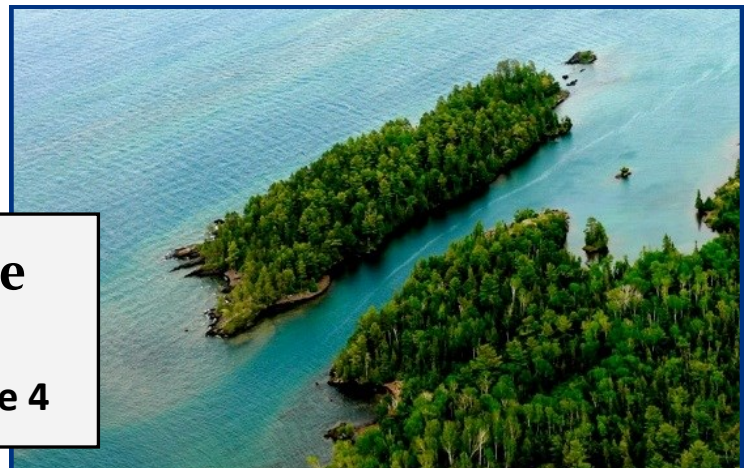
A search committee has been formed to begin the process of hiring our next executive director. As we navigate this transition, extend our appreciation to our community for its unwavering support. Join us on November 7 at the **Annual General Membership Meeting** (details page 7) to share memories and express our gratitude to Evan for two decades of service. Together, we'll continue accomplishing our mission.

As Evan closes this chapter of his career, we look ahead with excitement to the continuation of his legacy. To that end, please consider honoring Evan's 20-year service with a gift to the Keweenaw Land Trust. We remain committed to you, our members that make all of our work possible. I invite you to reach out to me or any other Board member with questions or thoughts you may have about this transition, or KLT's work.

Warmly,

Stephanie Tubman
President, KLT Board of Directors
stubman@gmail.com

**Silver Island: an entire
island protected!**
See full story of this gift on page 4



Legacy: An Executive Director's Point of View—*Evan McDonald*

Looking back on my two decades with KLT, I have much to contemplate, with many fond memories that reflect well on the organization's mission. I recall parents telling me how much they enjoyed discovering KLT nature areas with their young children, and how their kids enthusiastically asked to go back again and again. I made the acquaintance of some of those kids...and they are in college now! I see the tangible results of successful conservation projects, where people pulled together in partnership to protect some jewels of the Keweenaw. The word *jewel* was used surprisingly often over the years when people spoke about special places in the Keweenaw region.

While twenty years seems like a long time, that is a blip when we consider KLT's mission to permanently conserve lands to benefit the community's quality of life. Through a lens of history that means my legacy in this endeavor is ultimately modest, being one link in a long chain starting in 1996 with KLT's founders and extending ahead indefinitely, link by link. **I'll blend two metaphors to engender a vision of legacy for you: KLT is creating a chain adorned with jewels.**

My role gave me a rare, exquisite opportunity to get to know people with strong, personal connections to place, to see firsthand what that means to them, and to be present as their own conservation legacies were taking shape. I come away knowing: Terry Kinzel flashes his beaming smile whenever he sees people enjoying the trails at Churning Rapids; Gina Nicholas is tireless in her quest for conservation in Keweenaw County; John Ollila knows the meanderings (and fishing holes) of the Pilgrim River like the back of his hand; Mary Sinish quietly, steadily, and effectively turned her own vision into reality at Marsin Retreat; Sharon Emley's visits to the property that became the Steve Farm Nature Area brought tears to her eyes, as beloved childhood memories were rekindled; and Joe and Mary Hovel are awed and humbled when looking up at the grandfather trees in their Legacy forest. I have shared many intimacies like these, and it was a profound honor to be present to witness such personal, meaningful events and experiences that were part of creating conservation legacies – **they were all a source of inspiration for me.**

This newsletter celebrates Bill and Nanno Rose, whom I have known since my start with KLT. Bill has taught me much about Keweenaw geology, and his enthusiasm on the subject rubbed off on me and many others. Bill and Nanno loved sharing the experience of



Evan at 2004 dedication of the first "jewel" of his tenure: the CE for the Joseph and Mary Lizzadro Lakeshore Preserve owned by the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District.

Silver Island with family and friends over the years and we now recognize the legacy they created by sharing Silver Island with all of us. **They added another wonderful jewel to the KLT chain – we can all be grateful and inspired.**

We all get the legacy of protected lands, but many people involved with KLT leave important legacies that are not so obvious. Our eye is drawn to the jewels, but we need the chain to hold the jewels aloft for all to see and enjoy. Some of my fondest KLT memories relate to rather difficult situations and experiences. How can that be? Am I a glutton for punishment? Probably, but that's not it. The Executive Director is an employee of the Board of Directors – imagine having twelve bosses! With the Board's direction, the Executive Director and staff set about achieving the mission. Early on, when the Board and I were facing consequential decisions and were new to the process and work of governance, discussions were sometimes hard—even contentious. We had a dozen individuals in a room, each with different perspectives and experiences, but all of us in our own way trying to do right for KLT. Despite strong emotions and some real friction, we worked it out and made progress for the organization (*no pain, no gain* was my personal mantra in the early years). **That's why the difficult situations that yielded progress gave rise to some of my fondest KLT memories—I like teamwork that meets a challenge to achieve an outcome that really matters.** With time and practice, we are getting even better at the organizational governance process for KLT – now it is *less pain, more gain*. That is what good policies can

do (...Congress, if you're reading this).

In a healthy non-profit, the Directors of the Board come and go, so dozens of individuals have served on the KLT Board over the years. With this aspect I had a key role: to provide continuity for the policy and organizational development process as the Board went through turnover and transitions. The dozens of Directors over the years, with individual ideas, perspectives, passions, and efforts in service to the KLT mission, all created a legacy too – imbued and embodied now in the policies and process that guide the organization. **I hope part of my legacy is that I helped the Directors create their own legacies, forging their own links in the KLT chain. Moreover, every single KLT Board member over the years influenced me in meaningful ways, helping me figure out how I could help KLT succeed.**

The *chain* metaphor is not perfect here, but I chose it because every link does matter for a chain to perform its function. Hundreds of people have played a role for KLT to succeed and many more will join in moving forward. The founders, members, donors, partners, Directors, volunteers, and staff – each one is a link in

the chain that connects past, present, and future, adorned with the jewels of the Keweenaw. **Beautiful.**



Joe Hovel on foot bridge and other project partners listen to Evan at the Pilgrim Community Forest dedication in 2014.

It has been an honor to be part of this, and I am humbled and grateful to have had your trust and support for two decades.

Evan P. McDonald



Evan and Pat at the Hungarian Falls Nature Area dedication in 2013.

A tribute to Evan—Pat Toczydlowski

Two decades ago, Evan started his position as KLT's first Executive Director with practically nothing besides the hopes and dreams of the founders and built a respected community organization ever mindful of the big picture and a shared vision for our natural landscapes.

Evan has stewarded the organization well, using resources wisely, caring for its wellbeing on many levels and carefully leveraging to accomplish more. Partnership is key to our mission and Evan was effective at giving KLT a seat at many tables on issues of importance where he felt he and KLT might make

meaningful contributions. Evan is a good listener and synthesizer. Staff were recognized as individuals and given the flexibility to play to their strengths.

Evan is not known for a tidy desk, and though probably not intentional, this is reflective of the work of land trusts that is often messy. It is demanding work to run and fund the organization, manage staff, work with an ever-changing Board, and carry out the program work for the visible successes that excite us all.

Under Evan's leadership, KLT was not afraid to dream big and take measured risks, demanding objective reporting with clearly defined risks and contingencies to guide Board decisions. A hallmark of Evan's tenure is the Policy Governance framework he developed with several Boards to more effectively guide the work of the organization. This captures requirements for operating a legal and ethical organization and, like national accreditation, includes monitoring to identify changes for continuous improvement. It also makes expectations clearer and the work of staff easier.

KLT is bigger than any of us, each of us temporary stewards of the organization and its successes reflect the contributions of many. Evan has led with integrity and commitment in tune with the community, laying a groundwork that will serve KLT well into the future.

Silver Island! KLT entrusted with an inspirational Great Lakes jewel



The Keweenaw Land Trust was given the rare opportunity to protect an entire island in Lake Superior. Silver Island is about 8 acres in area and lies a long stone's throw off the north shore of the Keweenaw Peninsula near other protected lands on the mainland. The island is covered by mature forests, stunted in this harsh location, with a lush understory rich in native mosses, woodland plants and shrubs. Exposed, wave washed rock ledges and beaches harbor rare ecological communities and the nearshore waters are important to the native fishery of Lake Superior. Bill and Nanno Rose have generously entrusted the future of this rare gem to the land trust, reflecting that ***"for us and our family, the island was a stewardship that lasted 30 years. It made us happy. We treaded lightly and there have been no changes in the nature there. We shared meals over fires, sunrises and sunsets, moon rises, bald eagles and merganser families were always there, otters, martins, bobcats, grebes and loons were occasional. It is so quiet there. We hope for a similar future. Take care of it!"*** — Bill Rose

The land trust must carefully consider the costs and obligations for ongoing stewardship beyond the immediate costs to accept this tremendous gift to our community. KLT is grateful for a \$5,000 grant from the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition to help cover these costs. This was a summer of transition for the island with the Rose family



Bill and Nanno Rose (seated) at closing, KLT staff Pat and Evan, with Board member Nancy Langston in the middle.

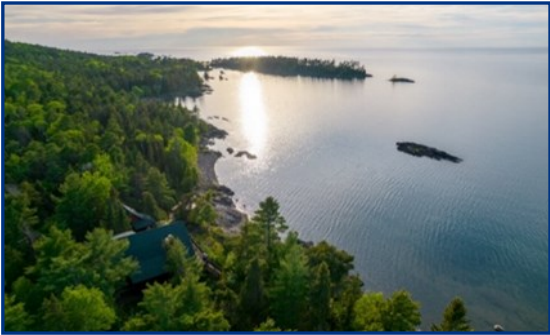
taking time to reflect on their decades of ownership and remove personal items from the rustic cabin and sauna. Among these is the treasured journal recording reflections of visitors over the years. Bill is compiling excerpts into a book for print, one copy will grace the island cabin.



The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) received funding to study islands of the Great Lakes of which there are over 30,000 in a wide range of sizes. Their combined shoreline contributes immensely to the coastal ecology of the Great Lakes, harboring distinctive ecological communities with unique assemblages of wildlife. They support colonial waterbirds, disjunct and rare species, provide critical stopover sites for migratory birds, and important nearshore fish spawning and nursery habitats. The conservation of Great Lakes islands is of increasing concern and importance as threats build, including invasive species, climate change impacts and development pressures. KLT was pleased that the MNFI team was able to add Silver Island to their itinerary, and their work will contribute to a management plan for the island. **The KLT is honored to be entrusted with Silver Island and looks forward to sharing in appropriate ways the awe and magnificence of this splendid and utterly unique place and the big waters that surround it.**

Geology of Silver Island—*Steph Tubman, KLT Board President, friend and former student of Bill Rose*

Silver Island, gifted by Bill and Nanno Rose, is the newest gem among KLT's lands under permanent conservation. The island has a long and storied history that connects residents of the Keweenaw today to the island as a meaningful and significant place in our region. Bill and Nanno purchased the island in 1991 and lovingly stewarded the site until its gift to KLT in March 2023. One feature of the island that immediately captures a visitor's attention is the bedrock that forms it. The bedrock of the island is basalt, a type of rock formed from lava flows on the Earth's surface. Nine or ten individual layers of lava flows have been counted to form the island. The lava flows feature the famous "amygdaloidal" flowtops, tiny air pockets from the off gassing of the lava that filled with minerals and were preserved by the crystallization of lava.



The lava flows were caused by a massive rifting, or pulling apart, of the Earth's crust around 1.1 billion years ago. This rifting occurred across a huge area through Michigan and the Midwest, where the Earth's crust pulled apart, like two slices of cheesy sheet pizza being pulled apart by someone quite hungry. This billion-year-old geologic feature is known as the Midcontinent Rift.

The hundreds of millions of years of history between the formation of these volcanic ridges and the earliest human visits to the island is not well known, because it was not preserved in rock the way these lavas so beautifully were. However, we do know that around 2.5 million years ago, the northern hemisphere was covered in huge glaciers, up to 1-2 miles thick. These further carved and shaped the landscape of the Keweenaw and Silver Island. For millions of years, the island sat under a mile of ice, until around 10,000 years ago. At that point the glaciers receded from the area, leaving the bedrock that formed the beautiful island we know today.



As it happens, the island's recent owner and steward knows a thing or two about all of this. Bill Rose is a professor emeritus of Geological and Mining Engineering and Sciences at Michigan Tech University, where he built a highly renowned career as a volcanologist, studying volcanoes and their processes locally at long-extinct volcanoes and abroad at active ones in Central America. He taught many people (including Evan) about the geologic history of the Keweenaw and Silver Island.

Image sources: Island Photo: Steve Brimm; Rift map: North America's Broken Heart, J. Marshall, Nature

Jim Northey and Sonia Goltz (our wonderful landlords at Quincy 101) have been honoring Steve Albee's Legacy for the past 3 years by giving KLT free rent for office expansion into room 14! A significant gift for which we are thankful. "We knew the Albee's through church and of Steve's commitment to the KLT, so we donated rent of an office to help KLT expand staff (valued at \$12,600) in Steve's honor. Now we will have to find another way to support KLT." - Jim Northey

KLT staff were pleased to benefit from of the innovative energy efficient commitments that the co-owners of Quincy 101 were putting in place. "We worked with Dave Bach to insulate ceilings and exterior walls, as well as replacing old windows. We reduced our natural gas consumption by about 2/3rds." - Jim

The new Limerick Street office also showcases the benefits of adding energy efficient modifications the seller made to this older structure. With new windows, added insulation, a heat pump hot water heater and new energy efficient furnace, KLT staff, Board members and visitors can enjoy the comfort and efficiency of this new space!



Steve monitoring the Covered Road conservation easement.

After 5 Moves, KLT Finds Permanence at Quincy Mining Co. Residence #146

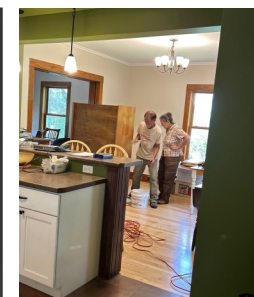
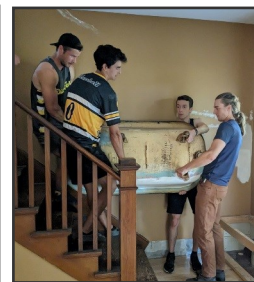
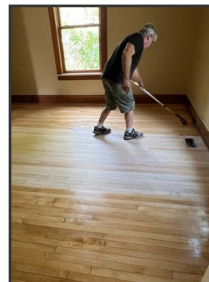
It began when a long time KLT member offered their house in Houghton for use as an office. The concept was seriously explored and found not workable for a variety of reasons, nor could it not be sold to generate revenue for KLT. However, the seed for this idea was planted. With the 5-year lease on our office facing renewal in August, 2023 and real estate and rent costs rising, perhaps it was time for KLT to find a more permanent home. An opportunity took shape with a solidly built mining era home with a newer two-stall garage in a good location that the owner, a founding member of the KLT, was willing to sell to KLT off market at appraised value. **A win-win situation for both parties** that prevented KLT from entering a bidding war and simplified the sale and logistics of the transition for the seller.

The strategy for KLT was to secure a mortgage with monthly payments equal to rent with a goal of accelerating payments to avoid interest expense and then lower monthly costs for the long run. **This old house is in good repair and buttoned up for energy efficiency and is fitting for KLT, with its history of using older existing buildings for its office.** The garage is a needed and welcomed addition to help us better store and access our growing stock of stewardship tools and supplies. This investment in the organization is one more sign of our permanence in the community, better fits our needs, and builds equity in the organization. **We've made the move and staff and Board, who all contributed to the down payment, are sharing in the sense of pride for KLT's new 'home'.** We will be hosting regular coffee hours and an open house in early December—come visit and see!



The house was ordered and built in 1918 by request of the Quincy Mining Company and rented to employees, recognizing the need for better housing to attract competitive employees. As was the case for many homes, all the parts, lumber, hardware arrived by train as one of the Original Sears, Roebuck and Co. kit houses, plan #B879 1/2. The first renter was William Oxnam, a rock house foreman who resided with his wife, Elizabeth. Their rent was \$14 a month! The legacy of the Keweenaw is one of beautiful landscapes and incredible mineral wealth which lead to the mining era and its legacy. KLT will continue the legacy of land protection our community has helped to build for the future, now from this new top of the hill location! The view of what still needs protecting is inspiring.

Thank you to all who helped with the office transformation and move!!



YOU can add to the KLT legacy

My gift to honor Evan McDonald

\$ _____

Name _____ Phone# _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Email Address _____

Also, I'd like to renew my membership giving level:

- ☐ \$20 STUDENT Membership
- ☐ \$50 Supporter ☐ \$100 Guardian ☐ \$250 Steward ☐ \$500 Champion ☐ Other \$ _____

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

*KLT respects your privacy and confidentiality. We do not sell our lists and we honor requests for anonymity.
 Also note that we don't send you lots of mail to recycle or address labels you don't need!*

Thank you for your gift! Dues and contributions are tax deductible. Please mail this form and payment to:

Keweenaw Land Trust, 49902 Limerick Street, Hancock MI 49930

Notice to KLT Members!!

KLT Annual General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, November 7, 2023
Social 5:45pm
Meeting 6:30-7:30pm

The meeting will be in-person with an online
 Zoom option.

[Email info@keweenalandtrusts.org](mailto:info@keweenalandtrusts.org) to get the zoom link.

In-person location: Orpheum Theatre in Hancock

Cash bar, free pizza and slideshow to celebrate Evan and his contributions to KLT. Come share your appreciation for the 20 years Evan has given to KLT and leave a little poem, note, your favorite memory on a KLT land, or one of our tiny art projects for Evan.

Our Annual Meeting is a chance to see a snapshot of KLT finances, accomplishments, and elect new Board members at a crucial time!



The Keweenaw Land Trust Board of Directors has formed a search committee to find our next Executive Director, with Nancy Langston and Stan Vitton as co-chairs of the search. We hope to post a job listing in Spring 2024, with the successful candidate taking on the role by January 2025.

KLT Board of Directors 2022-2023

Steph Tubman, President - Hancock
 Nancy Langston, Vice-Pres. - Chassell
 Bill Leder, Treasurer - Houghton
 Alex Hirzel, Secretary - Ripley
 Christine Handler - Houghton
 Calvin Koski - Aura

Evan Lanese - Hancock
 Erik Lilleskov - Houghton
 Jamie Robertson - Allouez
 Denis Stolter - Cuba, MO
 Louie Vencato - Hancock
 Stan Vitton - Hancock

KLT Staff through 2023

Evan McDonald, Executive Director
 Pat Toczydlowski, Project Specialist
 Jill Fisher, Botanist & Program Manager
 Carolyn Meingast, Office Manager
 Curtis Perala, Marsin Property Manager



49902 Limerick St.
Hancock, MI 49930



(906) 482-0820

info@KeweenawLandTrust.org

www.facebook.com/KeweenawLandTrust

www.KeweenawLandTrust.org

See you around, Evan!



«Addressee»

«Pref# Street»

«Pref# City», «Pref# State/Province» «Pref# ZIP/Postal
Code»

According to our records your last gift to KLT was on «Last gift date»

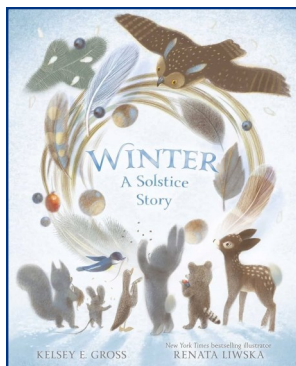
Upcoming Fall and early Winter KLT Outings

November 3-30: Alternative Story Trail at Paavola Wetlands - The pages of the classic fairy tale Goldilocks by James Marshall one way and an alternative telling in the return direction in Jed Alexander's wordless story **Gold** about non traditional families - every trail is different with a fresh perspective. No trail is the same twice!

November 20-Dec 4th any time but perhaps especially #OPToutside the Friday after Thanksgiving: Eileen Spinelli's Thankful Story trail at Hungarian Falls - Follow the story and the mini activities stationed along the trail. Remember these story trails are not just for kids but for the kid in everyone!

Dec 6 from 4:30 – 6:30pm: New Office and holiday open house! 49902 Limerick St., Hancock, just north of Peterson's Fish Market. Enjoy some holiday cheer and food and celebrate the new office space with KLT staff and Board Members!

Dec 21st: 4:30-9pm! starting at 4:30 for the younger crowd: Follow our annual luminary trail at Lily Creek! Families should come early as this year our winter solstice story trail will feature a newly published solstice book from local author Kelsey



Gross!! Kelsey will be at the clearing by Lily Creek where we have our annual bonfire and snacks. She will have copies of the book you can buy and she can sign. She will also have other winter books to read aloud. **Come celebrate the beauty of our winter wonders on the shortest night of the year! The luminary hike to the creek is quite magical and only a half mile. Remember to dress warm and bring headlamps!**