



Southern Madison Heritage Trust

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Dear SMHT supporter,

Great news from the Southern Madison Heritage Trust!

At this year's Land Trust Lobby Day, sponsored in Albany by the Land Trust Alliance, SMHT was awarded two grants; one, for \$5000, to enhance Board of Directors leadership, and another, for \$2,000, to help build a wetlands trail on our beloved Leland Reserve.

The board leadership grant creates a closer partnership with our "umbrella" organization, the Northeastern LTA, and matches us with a consultant who will work with us over a period of time. We expect that this engagement will improve our communications, both internally and with the six townships we cover, and will provide us with many ideas and materials for working with landowners who want to preserve their land for future generations.

The trail development grant will assist us in constructing a wetlands trail at our Leland Reserve on Preston Hill Road. Not only will this new trail offer new opportunities for hikers, but it will also provide an additional habitat for Hamilton Central School 5th graders to study. SMHT sponsors an ongoing project with these young conservationists that includes three trips a year to the Reserve, in-depth studies of the Reserve's varied habitats, and hands-on measuring of changes occurring during the seasons in which the classes visit. As a reward for the students' diligence, SMHT provides each 5th grader with our logo tee shirt.

We are very excited about these two new opportunities for SMHT. But we are required to contribute a \$500 match to each project. Contributions from the 11 Board members already total nearly \$500.

Can you help us complete our matches?

We will be most grateful for your help and, with your permission, we will proudly list your name as an SMHT supporter in our next newsletter.

You might also like to know about other important projects SMHT has been working on during the past year. In addition to our 5th grade project, we are now engaged in a stewardship and education partnership at Fiddler's Green, a rapidly shrinking bog about 3 miles north of Hamilton. Fiddler's Green is one of the few bogs left in Central New York State and is known to contain several rare

Conserving the natural resources in Southern Madison County

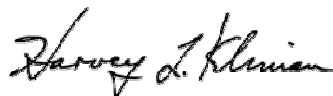
species of plants and salamanders. It is currently owned by The Nature Conservancy, but, through a special agreement, is cared for by SMHT. And, together with Colgate University professor Tim McCay and his environmental studies students, we're now undertaking to map the boundaries of the area, build a trail and, possibly, a boardwalk over some of it, identify and catalog the rare flora and fauna that live there, and construct a long range management plan to halt the bog's shrinkage.

We began this project auspiciously last summer (2010) with the award of a Colgate Upstate Institute Summer Fellow. Carl, a senior in environmental studies, worked a full-time schedule for 10 weeks to determine the water pH levels across the bog and to predict the bog's future (he thinks it could disappear in 20-30 years) through examination of aerial photos taken over the past 74 years. His work encouraged four students in the top level Environmental Studies course to continue the work in mapping, extending the pH measurements and developing a preliminary management plan. SMHT has *again* been awarded a Summer Fellow for 2011 to continue this important bog-saving work!

We've made two important additions to the Leland Reserve this year. The first is a safe parking area created just off Preston Hill Road that allows a turn-around for school busses and parking for several cars. Burt Marshall owns the land on which the parking lot is located and we *thank him for generously allowing us to use it*. The new parking area makes visiting the Reserve much safer since visitors no longer need to park at the edge of the road. The second addition is 500 feet of split rail fence along the roadside boundary of the property that will be enhanced with rambler roses and native grasses later this spring. Besides beautifying the Reserve, the fence also protects it from motorized vehicles which are prohibited according to the terms of our easement. Please come and take a walk on the Reserve – it's an easy trail with lots of different environmental features to view! We would certainly appreciate any donations directed toward the fence plantings.

You can see that the SMHT Board has had a productive year and is looking forward to digging into several exciting projects in the year to come. *We invite you to play a part in this important work. Please give us your financial support*, especially for the grant-funded projects we're crowing about, so you can share our pride and excitement as we work together to meet our long range conservation goals. For more information about anything relating to SMHT, feel free to call our Board President, Harvey Kliman, (315-824-3234) or email him at smht@smht.org. Check out our website at www.smht.org.

Very sincerely yours,



Harvey L. Kliman, President

P.S. How about celebrating the 4th of July with us and our parade float? In 2009 we won first prize in the category "The Greenest Theme" and we hope to do well again this year.

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