



2011 Ends with Success as Matching Challenge Grant and Membership Goals are Met!

On September 28, an anonymous benefactor of the St. Simons Land Trust stepped forward in announcing a challenge grant for the organization and its members: All new and/or renewed memberships and other gifts received by the Land Trust by December 31, 2011 (up to \$20,000 per donation and up to \$500,000 in total), would be matched dollar for dollar in a separate gift to the campaign to acquire and preserve Cannon's Point.

The Land Trust team went to work, announcing the opportunity and urgency of the challenge grant to both members and the public in October. The response was swift and significant with approximately \$495,000 in memberships and other gifts received by the Land Trust before the year-end deadline! The matching gift to the Cannon's Point project resulting from the successful challenge grant means that approximately 80% of the \$25-million needed to acquire Cannon's Point is now in hand through donations and pledges.

"The challenge grant and our year-end membership goals were both ambitious," said Dana Pope, the Land Trust's Director of Development and Membership. "But over the years, we've have learned that the best form of real community-wide support for projects, especially in the case of Cannon's Point, is in maintaining and growing our membership base. A larger membership base going forward will provide the Land Trust with the annual funds we need to continue to acquire important properties around the Island. We are grateful to all those whose generous, on-going financial support allows the Land Trust to look ahead to the challenges of 2012 with great confidence."

▶ [Click here to watch the Land Trust's Cannon's Point video.](#)

Helpful Links:

[Click here to visit sslt.org](#)

[Click here to donate to the Land Trust](#)



New Bike Path Soon!

By spring of 2012, cyclists in the Golden Isles will be able to enjoy a newly planned bike path to be created along the Sea Island Causeway linking St. Simons Island and Sea Island. If the project goes as planned, the roughly one-mile path will stretch from the intersection of Frederica and Sea Island Roads on St. Simons along the northern side of Sea Island Causeway to a turnaround point at the Sea Island security gate.

The path is a collaboration of Sea Island, which is designing the path, as well as the Path Foundation, the Azalea Foundation and the St. Simons Land Trust. In designing the path, Sea Island is also working closely with officials from Glynn County as well as the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Due to its proximity to the marsh, and to be in keeping with DNR guidelines, the path will be constructed of a special, pervious material to allow water run-off, rather than concrete used in typical paths.

"This path will add an entirely new and beautiful marsh view to the existing cycling experience on St. Simons Island," said Sea Island President Scott Steilen. "We are very excited to help make it possible and appreciate the generosity and efforts of everyone involved in making the path a reality."

Speaking on behalf of the St. Simons Land Trust, Executive Director Ben Slade said, "We are very pleased to see this path come about. Our first major path, completed in 2010 along the length of Lawrence Road, involved these same organizations and has been very popular."

The 12th Annual Land Trust Oyster Roast

What an Evening!

By all accounts, the recent Land Trust Oyster Roast, held on Saturday, November 19, was among the best ever! The new location for the event, beneath the festively lit Live Oaks of Gascoigne Park, was sensational as over 700 persons came out to enjoy an evening of great foods, good friends and lively music.

"Gascoigne Park overlooking the Frederica River was an exciting and wonderful location with plenty of room to expand the event in the future," said Jennifer Leavy who co-chaired the 2011 Oyster Roast with Ann McLaughlin. "Ann and I are grateful for the dedication of the numerous event committees made up of over a hundred volunteers who worked so diligently to make this year's oyster roast a great success. We're already looking forward to next year."



▶ Ann McLaughlin (left) and Jennifer Leavy, co-chairs of the 2011 Oyster Roast. The pair has graciously agreed to co-chair next year's event, too!

▼ Guests shucked their way through nearly 45 bushels of oysters, complemented by a low country boil and an array of great foods from area restaurants.



A Story We Couldn't Wait to Share with Members

Over the years, there have been numerous stories of how individuals and families, both residents and visitors, whose love of this area of the coast leads them to discover and support the work of the Land Trust. This one begins simply, with tickets to the recent oyster roast.

Molly Moroney Norrett, an actress and playwright from Dallas, moved to St. Simons with her husband Bill in May of this year. Yet Molly was no stranger to our area. Since 1961, she and her brothers and sister had come to Sea Island with their parents every summer, renting the same cottage year after year.

In early November, a neighbor told Molly about the upcoming Land Trust oyster roast and encouraged her to attend. A few days later, Molly arrived at the Land Trust offices, purchased her tickets and became a member. Intrigued with what she had heard that day in speaking with Susan Crowley, Molly decided she wanted to know more about the work of the Land Trust.

She read the Land Trust literature, visited the website, watched the Cannon's Point video and found herself compelled to deepen her support of the Land Trust's mission.

In December, Molly returned to Dallas to attend, along with her siblings, the annual board meeting of the family's charitable foundation, established by her late parents. She enthusiastically reported on the Land Trust's efforts to acquire and preserve Cannon's Point and sought the foundation's support of the project. "My brothers and sister love these Georgia islands as much as I do. It was an easy sell," remembers Molly.

A few weeks ago, Molly returned to the Land Trust offices and presented the organization with a very significant and generous financial gift to the Cannon's Point project! Said Molly, "In many ways, I feel like I grew up here. Our family wants the beauty and charm of St. Simons Island to be preserved for future generations."