



OLTA Gathering 2005

The 2005 OLTA Gathering was held November 11th-13th at the Kempenfelt Conference Centre in Barrie, Ontario. This year we attracted the largest number of land trust representatives and professionals to date. The conference featured a series of workshops carefully chosen to strengthen the land trust movement in Ontario. The Organizing Committee focused on raising the bar to meet the needs of our growing land trusts by offering professional level workshops on a variety of topics from Volunteer Management to Building a Board that Works. Each workshop was designed to answer the tough questions our organizations encounter.

Highlights included a presentation by Tammara Van Ryn of the US LTA, who spoke on the development of their Accreditation and Training Program for land trusts. Tammara packed the room on Friday afternoon. Members and associates of OLTA listened intently to the "south of the border" issues and solutions, recognizing that soon we may encounter similar experiences.

Representatives from across Canada were at the conference to take part in meetings of the Canadian Land Trust Alliance. Many stayed on and attended the OLTA workshops and our evening social events.

It would not be an OLTA Gathering without the OLTA Auction. We received more donations than previous years thanks to the efforts of April Mathes. The auction items ranged from golf shirts – to calendars. Once again this year, the Georgian Bay Land Trust put a Ball Cap on the auction block. This annual tradition results in a down and dirty bidding war between Wally King and a competitor. This year Paul Peterson tried in vain to win the coveted cap. Paul gave in as Wally topped all of his previous records and purchased his own hat for \$450. This year OLTA raised over \$4,000. at our auction. We would like to thank April for a job well done in coordinating this year's auction and all the generous donors and bidders for their support. Thank you also to Jo-Anne Rzadki for her help with the auction and our workshops.

The Gathering takes months of planning and requires a team of organizers and volunteers, who work diligently to coordinate this event. We would like to thank the many members and volunteers who contributed to this year's event and the Education Committee for lining up a great series of workshops.

Thank you all for making this event a sell-out!

OLTA Board 2005-2006

Listed below are those dedicated volunteers who will make up the OLTA Board for the next years term.

Chairperson Christopher Baines
Melissa Watkins
Bill Salter
Joan Eaglesham
Alan Ernest
Wally King
Sally Gillis

April Mathes
Lisa McLaughlin
Katie Goldberg-Zwick
Peter Hannah
Angus McLeod
JoAnne Rzadki

Wetland Habitat Fund Bulletin for OLTA members

On behalf of the Wetland Habitat Fund Program, congratulations on another successful Gathering! I had hoped to attend myself (our local land trust in Arnprior is also a member), but unfortunately I was not able to make it. I am very happy that one of our field representatives, Leora Berman, was able to attend on our behalf to meet with attendees and to discuss items of mutual interest. I am particularly pleased because of the many positive conversations she had with people there.

Wildlife Habitat Canada/Wetland Habitat Fund has been engaged in discussions with provincial representatives of OLTA, to find ways to better partner on the landscape. WHF field representatives are also teaming up with land trusts at the local level. It has been exciting to hear some of the ideas emerging about ways to link our local initiatives. We have also been sharing ideas about ways to better support and serve the land trust movement nationally and ways to make connections with the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture and the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Our initiatives share a common interest in landowners and habitat stewardship, and I hope that we can be more closely linked in the months and years ahead.

If you haven't seen it already, please go to the link below for a (slightly revised) copy of the WHF bulletin we prepared for the OLTA Gathering. Please contact me or your local WHF field representatives if you have any questions.

<http://www.whc.org/wetlandfund/en/home/communications/bulletins/bulletins.html>

Thanks very much for your time.

Happy Holidays, and keep up the great work!

Mark Stabb

Manager

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Feature Land Trust of the Month

KAWARTHA HERITAGE CONSERVANCY: GROWING A REGIONAL LAND TRUST

The Kawartha Heritage Conservancy (KHC) has recently taken major steps forward in its capacity, financing and role within the Kawarthas bioregion.

Over the last year, KHC has undergone a renewal of its Board of Directors. We have recruited some outstanding new Directors and are finding new talents and energies in others. Newer Directors bring experience from the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Parks Canada, Trent University, cottage associations and FOCA, plus international development. Others are finding renewed interest through OLTA workshops and tangible means to apply their skills. One of the challenges we continue to face is recruiting more Directors to sustain a critical mass from working landscapes and the full sweep of our geography.

The renewal of the Board has fostered a widening vision of our mission to conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Kawarthas. We held a Board retreat in September to share and merge our visions and strategies for the organization. It is recognized by our Board that we have a leading role in securing important properties within the Kawarthas. In addition, we further identified that, together with other NGOs and agencies, we need enhanced information and engagement in the overall planning of the bioregion, particularly with several Official Plans under review and new provincial planning underway

Our challenge is how to achieve this broader mission. Part of the answer comes from Trent University and Fleming College student assistance with information gathering and research. Our partnership with neighbouring Couchiching Conservancy and other land trusts for The Land Between ecotone has opened opportunities with a variety of agencies for data sharing and collaborative research. Other roles in the Large Woodlands Conservation Co-operative and Ganaraska Plains initiative allow us to build connections, synergies and referrals with other local stewardship partners, including other land trusts.

An important aspect of our recent success has been successful proposals for multi-year capacity funding from the Metcalf and Oak Ridges Moraine Foundations, as well as important support from the McLean Foundation and MNR. Our demonstrated interest in information, planning opportunities and the integration of cultural and natural heritage helped make our proposals attractive. Such support has enabled KHC to hire Ian Attridge as Executive Director, with plans for other staff and shared, higher profile office space. Ian will also continue his role on OLTA's Government Relations Committee.

KHC currently holds two conservation easements, with new title and easement donations expected within weeks (to total 550 acres). We maintain an exciting list of prospects. KHC has also assisted Ontario Nature, OHF and two local municipalities in securing other important properties. In just four years, we have come a long way!

KHC has learned much from more established land trusts. We look forward to continued participation in the OLTA network, knowing that our success and experience will in turn contribute to broader achievements for the land trust movement and conservation, both here in Ontario and beyond.

Happy Holidays



Photo by Simon Lunn

Wishing everyone a very safe and Happy Holiday

Have Well

Anne Binstow

Sharon Walker

In a continuing effort to improve the programs and member services, OLTA publishes and distributes, by e-mail, a monthly bulletin to all its members. Please contribute your newsworthy items to the monthly newsletter. The articles should be limited to a paragraph or two and include a contact number where OLTA members can get more information. All submissions should be in our hands no later than the 20th of each month.