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*Queens University of Charlotte students volunteer Sept. 17 to reposition the trapping system the Conservancy uses at the Ridge Road Nature Preserve to monitor marbled and spotted salamanders. This project is one of several that allow Queens students the opportunity to learn on a permanently conserved property.*

## Conserved Land Provides Outdoor Classroom for Queens Students

A new partnership with Queens University of Charlotte allows natural science students an opportunity to put classroom lessons into action on three conserved properties.

Queens students in the introductory environmental science class are assisting with the Conservancy's salamander trapping program at Whitehall Nature Preserve. They will monitor salamanders' movements and population and evaluate historical data for trends.

"North Carolina and the world are becoming increasingly urbanized, and it's important for students to understand the effect that has on natural systems," said Assistant Professor of Environmental Science Reed Perkins. "Whitehall is perfect for that. It's an island surrounded by asphalt, and it's amazing the salamanders have been able to hang on there."

The higher level conservation biology class, taught by Jeff Steinmetz, also an assistant professor of environmental science, will focus on drafting a property management plan for Whitehall by using plans from

Mecklenburg County as a template.

"This gives them practical skills in land management with experience with both a county government and a nonprofit," Steinmetz said.

The Conservancy's 506-acre Stanley Creek Forest is the site of study for Assistant Professor of Biology Lisa Richardson-Calfee's botany students. Students are learning about basic plant identification, leaf characteristics and habitat at a property whose plant communities vary widely and are relatively free of invasive species.

Students from all disciplines participated Sept. 17 in a community service project at Ridge Road Nature Preserve to pick up trash and upgrade the system the Conservancy uses to monitor salamanders on the property.

These experiences all help make conservation more tangible. Steinmetz and Perkins are helping form an environmental science major for the university, which likely will expand the Conservancy's partnership with them.

*Continued on page 3 . . .*

**Give the gift  
of conserved land  
this holiday season!  
See page 8.**

### Mission

Catawba Lands Conservancy permanently protects land, water and wildlife habitat to enhance your quality of life.

**5,896 acres protected!**

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Sharon Wilson, *Land Stewardship Director*



Dear Friends,

It's been a busy fall at the Conservancy! We've been working hard advancing our land protection successes, planning and hosting the Parties for the Land gala and stewarding our conserved properties. We also are focused on exploring new models for land conservation given the challenges for land protection consistent with sky-rocketing land prices and unprecedented land development in our area.

While expanding our conserved acreage is our top priority at the Conservancy, the oversight of already protected lands is a close second. Our strong commitment to conserved lands, called stewardship, sets us aside from many other land trusts struggling with this issue.

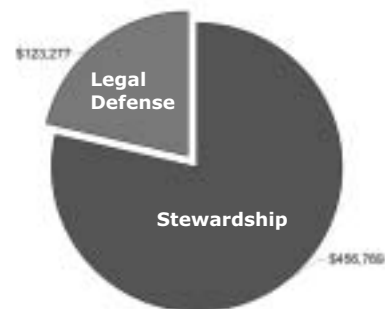
The Conservancy has a perpetual responsibility to steward our lands, reflecting our permanent commitment to our community. In accepting a conservation easement or land, the Conservancy assumes the legal responsibility for perpetually carrying out the donor's intentions by protecting and defending the property's conservation values. In fact, IRS regulations that empower the Conservancy to function as a nonprofit conservation organization eligible to accept and defend tax-deductible conservation easements require that we have the resources to enforce restrictions of the easements.

Proper stewardship of land requires monitoring and, if necessary, legal defense of a property's conservation values. Unlike many other land trusts, we have established and funded endowments to fund help pay for our future stewardship obligations. The balances for stewardship and legal defense funds are shown graphically here.

The big question facing us and other land trusts is this: Given all the uncertainties of what lies ahead, what funding levels of stewardship and legal defense endowments are enough to sustain our work? Stewardship endowment needs are somewhat easier to forecast. Under Sharon Wilson's leadership, we develop property monitoring and management budgets for each of our 60 properties and establish endowment funding to provide the necessary funds over time. Legal defense needs are much more speculative.

While we don't have all the answers, your land trust is working diligently to plan for living up to our permanent commitment to land protected in our community. Thank you for your continued strong support.

Endowment Funds - Legal Defense vs Stewardship (8/30/95)



Gratefully,

Davis J. Cable  
Executive Director



Conservancy board member Dr. Chuck Meakin speaks Oct. 6 at the Fall Corporate Breakfast held at the Gaston City Club.

## Breakfast Expands Reach in Gaston, Lincoln Counties

The Conservancy hosted its second annual Fall Corporate Breakfast Oct. 6 at the Gaston City Club. The event gathered more than 40 business and community leaders with a common concern for the long-term quality of life in Gaston County. Those attending listened to several guest speakers, including keynote speaker Sen. David W. Hoyle, who discussed the importance of investing in our community through land conservation.

The Conservancy is dedicated to adding land to the more than 4,000 acres already conserved in Gaston County. We strive to provide educational opportunities to the community and continue to meet our long-term stewardship obligations by overseeing protected lands. Support from the breakfast and those business leaders in attendance will help to fulfill this mission.

*Continued from page 1*

“Projects like this will give students real world research projects with immediate conservation application,” Steinmetz said.



Interdisciplinary Service Learning Day, September 2005 at Ridge Road

## Corporate Partners

### Leadership: \$20,000+

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MECKLENBURG COUNTY  
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### Friend: \$500+

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Crowder Construction	Quantum Leap Strategies
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Elliot-Warren	Team Bank of America
Hart & Hickman	Environmental Network
Horizon Eye Care	Tribble Creative Group
Howard Construction Co.	Watson Insurance Company
McCullough England Associates	Willis Consulting Group, Inc.

# Technology is a Key Ingredient to Conservation Success

Technology is a key ingredient in today's land conservation efforts, and it is playing an increasingly important role in promoting the Conservancy's mission to the public.

"The Conservancy has invested heavily in technology," said Executive Director Dave Cable, "but we are seeing a great return on that investment in our land protection and stewardship efforts."

The Conservancy's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology is on par with or better than many of the counties in our service area, said Technology Coordinator Scott Bodien. GIS is a computer mapping software that combines data from government, municipal and nonprofit sources with today's sophisticated satellite imagery.

The system can generate maps in a variety of styles indicating everything from acreage and topography to tree cover and soil types. GIS helps the Conservancy systematically identify parcels with high conservation value and is an excellent tool for working with landowners to map the different conservation options available for their properties.

"The variety of maps the system can produce really helps landowners envision the conservation possibilities," said Land Protection Director Andrew Waters.

This summer Bodien developed a scoring model that identifies parcels with high conservation value by using GIS

to rate them on 10 different attributes ranging from acreage and stream frontage to slope and distance from other conserved properties. The staff is currently using this model to study the South Catawba Fork River to identify conservation opportunities.

After land is conserved, Land Stewardship Director Sharon Wilson relies on global positioning technology, commonly known as GPS, to streamline the Conservancy's fieldwork.

"We use GPS to mark points in the field," explains Wilson. "The GPS system helps us find those points quickly on our monitoring visits. It helps save me and our stewardship volunteers countless hours in the field."

This fall the Conservancy began using e-mail to keep members and friends of the Conservancy informed about important issues. If you are interested in receiving the Conservancy's periodic e-mail updates, please e-mail [info@catawbalands.org](mailto:info@catawbalands.org) and include your name and mailing address.

## Winter Nature Spotlight

### It's for the Birds!

The upcoming cooler months are a wonderful time to invite feathered friends into your yard. What makes your yard inviting to winter birds? In a nutshell, water and seeds—specifically black oil sunflower seeds—are wildly popular with many familiar songbirds, including blue jays, nuthatches, wood peckers, cardinals, titmice and goldfinches.

To enjoy these encounters with wildlife, be sure to place your bird feeders or seeds in an open area where you can enjoy their visits and where they can keep a watchful eye for predators.



*Tufted titmouse*



*Allyson and Courtney Wilson create holiday wreaths at the 2004 volunteer event.*

## We Welcome Volunteers Dec. 17 to Make Holiday Wreaths

*The Conservancy invites all active volunteers to join us Saturday, Dec. 17, from 1 to 4 p.m. for the second annual holiday wreath-making event. We will provide supplies, including evergreens from conserved properties and refreshments.*

*Please register to Darlene Hassler Godwin at [info@catawbalands.org](mailto:info@catawbalands.org) or 704.342.3330, ext 210, by Dec. 12 to ensure enough supplies.*

# Wanted: Fresh Air and Exercise Stewardship Opportunities Abound

If flexible hours, working outside and developing new skills interest you, then volunteering at the Conservancy should make it to your New Years resolution list. Check out the stewardship programs below, and contact Land Stewardship Director Sharon Wilson for details.

## Salamander Trappers

The Conservancy has been involved in a research project for nine years that involves a unique upland swamp home to spotted and marbled salamanders. Individuals and “trapper teams” commit to check traps on an assigned day at either Ridge Road or Whitehall nature preserves. Trapping involves walking a well-marked trail and checking five-gallon buckets (traps) into which salamanders may have fallen. Conservancy staff will train you in handling, identifying, sexing, and safely releasing the salamanders and recording basic weather observations. This involves a weekly time commitment from October through April.

## Conservation Monitors

The Conservancy is required by law to check all properties at least once a year. Since we are at nearly 60 properties and growing, site visits are accomplished through a network of volunteers. Conservation monitors

are required to participate in some very basic training (Conservation Monitoring 101), which is provided by the Conservancy. A site visit includes checking the property boundaries, taking photos and completing a short report for documentation.

## Birding Team

If you are serious about learning to identify the many



*Sharon Wilson explains a recent trash pick up at the Stanley Creek Forest. Volunteers like these are important to the success of the Conservancy's stewardship program.*

species of birds found in the Southern Piedmont, this is a great opportunity. Dr. Rob Bierregaard, UNCC assistant professor of biology, has offered to share his knowledge with a small group of dedicated volunteers. Dr. Bierregaard will instruct participants in field identification and the process of conducting an avian-point-count survey. As with salamander trapping, this unique opportunity will require a substantial time commitment from the volunteer. Volunteers will be required to adopt a property and complete a season of point surveys on the property. Group size will be

limited to optimize the learning opportunity.

Participants will need to provide their own binoculars and field guide. Dr. Bierregaard suggests 8x30 or 8x40 binoculars.

## Site Stewards

Site stewards have the opportunity to “adopt” a piece of Conservancy-owned property and play a role in its management. Responsibilities include the annual monitoring visit, coordinating needed workdays, checking and maintaining boundary lines, making management recommendations and working to educate neighboring landowners.

The Conservancy encourages Site stewards to visit the property at least once a quarter. This is a great opportunity to engage a group of scouts or other club or a regular basis. The Conservancy requests that Site stewards attend Conservation Monitoring 101 to get the basic training necessary to conduct the annual monitoring.

## Invasive Species Busters

Invasive species are a management concern on many Conservancy-owned properties. Team members are needed to work under the direction of a team leader to identify and help eradicate invasive species. This may involve physical

## INC Parties Connect You to the Land in 2006

*Integrating Nature and Community (INC) party tickets that were first available to guests at our Nov. 5 Parties for the Land gala now are on sale to the public.*

*Read descriptions about the following parties on the Conservancy's web site, [www.catawbalands.org](http://www.catawbalands.org).*

- *A Day on the Links*
- *Garden Walk*
- *Owl Prowl*
- *Birding and Breakfast*
- *Fly Casting for Beginners*
- *Yoga in the Garden*
- *Andre Michaux Hike*
- *Canoeing the Catawba*
- *Swamp Romp*

*If you would like to purchase tickets, call 704.342.3330, ext. 210. Spaces are limited.*

labor in the form of pulling, cutting and spraying pesticides. The Conservancy will provide all the necessary equipment.

*Please refer to the upcoming events on page 8 for dates in 2006 that complement these programs.*

# New and Renewing Memberships

*Thank you to our new and renewing members and contributors, received July 1 through Sept. 30.*

## **Landscape Steward, \$2,500+**

Frank and Kathy Bragg

## **Heritage Benefactor, \$1,000+**

Dr. Billy S. Howell, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. R. Michael  
Ranson  
Mark Stanback and Nancy  
Popkin  
Michael and Alice Teague

## **Piedmont Patron, \$500+**

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Nancy Howe  
Norman and Rhonda Innes  
Tommy and Katie Lee  
M633, INC  
Barry and Lee Ann McGinnis  
Jack and Pat Meckler  
Ben and Leah Williams

## **Watershed Sponsor, \$250+**

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## **Forest Preserver, \$100+**

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James and Martha Stenhouse  
Daniel Stewart and Allyson Sipple  
Frank and Harriet Thompson  
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Peter and Jan Vandevanter  
Hamlin and Julia Wade  
Charles Waters and Linda Moxley  
Kia Whittlesey  
Derek Williams  
Thom M. Young  
Andrew and Lisa Zerkle

## **River Protector, \$50+**

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Scott Bodien  
Mary Boyer  
Bianca Bradford  
Charlie Burdick  
Amy Busby  
E. Scott and Marni Carpenter  
John and Ann Chalk  
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Robert and Nancy Covert  
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Herbert and Lynn Lawton  
Jeff LeVie  
Charles Longbottom  
Ann Macon-Ellis  
Jennifer Martin  
Virginia W. Mason  
Ron and Carole Massey  
C. Wayne and Beth McKinzie  
Karen McMillan  
Trent and Mindy Merchant  
Robert and Margaret Norris  
Roger and Alisa Pelz  
Charles and Karin Rankin  
Kurt R. Rawald  
Jack and Pat Rhyne  
Nat and Brenda Smith  
Gary A. Spargo  
Jack Steele

*Dear Santa—*

*I know your elves are busy making toys and the reindeer are in training for the long night. If you happen to get in a pinch and stop by a hardware store, the Conservancy's stewardship program could use the following items:*

- Shovels
- Cotton gloves
- Long handled loppers
- Plastic industrial gloves
- Compasses
- Insect repellent
- Heavy duty pruners

*I'm sure you are busy this time of year. If you can't drop the items by our office at 105 W. Morehead Street in Charlotte, call me at 704.342.3330, and I will gladly pick them up.*

*Season Greetings,  
Sharon Wilson  
Land Stewardship Director*

Wendy Talley  
Joseph Taylor  
William and Frances Thompson  
Ronald and Gayle Underwood  
Greg and Sharon Urban  
Village Store of Davidson  
John Warnken  
Tom and Kim Watson  
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Weathers  
Lamar and Bette White  
Robin Whitley  
Kenneth W. Whitney  
Sharon Wilson  
Robert and Jenny Lou Wright  
John and Sandy Yakob  
Bruce and Debbie Yelton

**Habitat Conserver,  
\$35+**

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Verne and Dianne Deason  
Ann Depta  
Denise Finck-Rothman  
Thomas and Debra George  
Helen S. Harrill  
Karen and Herb Harriss  
Dawn Hartman  
Mack and Georgia Hollis  
George Huffstetler  
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Marc and Marissa Laster  
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Gerry and Marianne Lieberman  
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Hardin and Linda Minor  
Pauline Niilend  
Margaret O'Connor  
Sarah B. Perry  
Bea Quirk  
Mary and Nathan Rantala  
Mr. and Mrs. James A. Thompson  
Michael and Catherine Vowell

**Honorariums, Memorials  
and Gift Memberships**

George and Mary Lou Buck, in  
memory of Vernita B. Coxe.  
Catawba Lands Conservancy, in  
memory of Wendy Waite.  
Jack and Rita Horan, in memory of  
Stan Brennan.  
Betty Nisbet, gift membership for  
Margaret and Patrick Lucas.  
Virginia Landis Smith, in memory  
of Claude Hinson.  
Patrick Smyth, gift membership for  
Sarah Hixson.  
Allison Vogt, gift membership for  
Michael and Jeanine Wilson.  
*In memory of Jean Cantrell Rankin:*  
Roy Alexander and Sue Peck  
Budd and Leslie Berro  
Johanna and Gunther Bienert  
Dave and Elizabeth Cable  
J.M. and Catherine Carstarphen  
Eugene and Marie Anne Daniels  
Joe Hamrick and Jean Woods  
Home Builders Association of  
Charlotte  
Ralph and Patricia Levering  
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Lawrence and Alice Owens  
Adam and Sonia Perillo  
Yates and Frances Springs  
Greg and Debra Towery  
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**Grants**

Akers Foundation  
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**Special Gifts**

Kathryn Heath and Tom Webb

**In-kind**

**Subscribe Today for E-News  
from Your Land Trust**

We began sending periodic e-mail updates in September to tell you about new conservation successes, upcoming events and newsletter postings on our web site.

If you would like to receive these updates, please make sure we have your correct e-mail address. E-mail us at [info@catawba-lands.org](mailto:info@catawba-lands.org), and include your name, mailing address and phone number so we can check your information in our database. If you wish to read your newsletter from our web site and discontinue receiving it in the mail, please specify that in your e-mail.

**Volunteers  
Make it Happen**

*Thanks to our fall volunteers:*

**Membership**

David Herran  
Chris Jeffcoat  
Michael Mann  
Connie Sharp

**Office/Miscellaneous**

Christie and Erin Brooks  
George and Mary Lou Buck  
Mollie Cable  
Anne Davidson  
Laura Duis  
Colleen Frenzel  
Rollie Lawson  
Janet E. Levy  
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College students

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Bob Shuford

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Ben and Lori Ann Owen  
Parties for the Land Committee

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Queen's University CORE stu-  
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Shield Engineering

*racy of this list. Please notify the  
Conservancy of any corrections, and we  
apologize for any errors or omissions.*

*Every effort was made to ensure the accu-*

# Give the Lasting Gift of Conserved Land This Holiday Season

Show a loved one how much you care or recognize an outstanding colleague with a meaningful gift to the Conservancy. Recipients will receive a beautiful holiday card with property photo and a personalized message notifying them of your thoughtfulness.

You may choose to give either a gift membership or make a contribution to the Conservancy in recognition of your loved one. Gift membership recipients will receive the Conservancy newsletter, invitations to events and other membership benefits for one year.

We prepare each card individually, so please request your holiday gifts by Dec. 15. Gift memberships are available on our web site through the "gift donations" form, or you may call the Conservancy at 704.342.3330 to arrange your special gift.

*Catawba Lands Conservancy is part of a network of 23 land trusts that collectively have protected more than 186,000 acres of the places you love in North Carolina.*



*Your land trust. Your quality of life.*

105 W. Morehead Street  
Charlotte, NC 28202  
704.342.3330  
info@catawbalands.org  
www.catawbalands.org

*The Official  
Charity of*



## Upcoming Events

### Volunteer Wreath-Making Event

Saturday, Dec. 17, from 1 to 4 p.m., Conservancy office.

We invite active volunteers to the Conservancy's newly renovated office to make a holiday wreath from greens on our conserved properties.

*Please contact Land Stewardship Director Sharon Wilson at [sharon@catawbalands.org](mailto:sharon@catawbalands.org) if you are interested in being a stewardship volunteer and attending the following sessions. Prior registration is required.*

### Conservation Easement Monitoring 101

Jan. 24 and Feb. 16, 6 to 7 p.m., Conservancy office.

Participants will learn the basis principles of conservation easement monitoring. Topics include why the Conservancy monitors properties, interpreting baseline surveys and natural heritage inventories, photo documentation and the paperwork process.

### Conservation Easement Monitoring 201

Feb. 1 and Feb. 23, 6 to 7 p.m., Conservancy office.

Refresher training for experienced monitors and team leaders. Basic review of policies and procedures, photo-taking tips and update on new acquisitions. Both sessions will include 20 to 30 minutes of field first aid under the instruction of a wilderness EMT.

### Field Use of the Garmin GPS Unit and Basic Map Reading

Classroom instruction: March 28, 6 to 7:15 p.m., Conservancy office.

Field exercise: April 1 and April 8, 10 a.m. to noon, Freedom Park.

Classroom sessions will focus on basic principles needed to interpret topo and ortho maps. We will cover the specifics of using GPS units to navigate and record photo points and other information. Field experience will provide a fun environment to put new skills to use in a practical situation.

### Birding Team

May 2006, date and time to be announced.

Must have practical experience using GPS unit or attend the Garmin GPS/Map Reading training session.

Forwarding Service Requested

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
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