

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 4

COMPLIMENTARY

Please Take One

Thomasville

CHRISTMAS 24/7
SWGA FAMILY HONORS
A HOLIDAY LOVING MEMBER

GOURMET HOLIDAY
RECIPES TO ENJOY AND
GIFT THIS SEASON

GIVING BACK
FRIENDS & STARS
DIXIE LEE HEDRINGTON-MILLER OPENS UP THE WORLD OF
ART TO CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX STRUGGLES

PEACE *on* EARTH

FINDING BEAUTY, GRATITUDE AND MAGIC IN THIS WINTER SEASON OF GIVING

WHETHER CHOOSING TO PASS DOWN FAMILY PROPERTY TO THE NEXT GENERATION OR PURCHASE PROPERTY AS AN INVESTMENT, PRESERVATION SHOULD BE TOP OF MIND.

Generational Land Stewardship



Investing in land for future generations can be a solid financial decision.

What finer legacy can one generation leave to future generations than the stewardship of land?

The Red Hills region has much to be proud of, including the vast stretches and wide swaths of private properties owned by individuals aware of the importance of wildlife conservation and land and resource management. Whether overseen by generations of a single family of preservationists or a new landowner eager to learn best practices of land management, maintaining high standards in land stewardship is top of mind for many in this area.

An invaluable resource to landowners in the area is Tall Timbers, a non-profit organization whose mission is to foster exemplary land stewardship through research, conservation and education. Their primary research focus is the ecology and management of fire-dependent ecosystems and wildlife, including bobwhite quail, in the Southeastern Coastal Plain. Their conservation efforts are dedicated to helping protect the distinctive, rural landscape of South Georgia and North Florida and its traditional land uses from farming to hunting.

Tall Timbers strives to expand the use of Exemplary Land Stewardship practices, which balance ecological values and economic utility within a framework of long-term conservation. The foundation of this type of stewardship on upland habitats is the frequent use of prescribed fire to manage for bobwhite, selection timber harvest, other traditional land uses and biodiversity. Scenic, open, multi-aged forest structures are hallmarks of Exemplary Land Stewardship, according to Tall Timbers leadership.

Under the Jon Kohler & Associates brokerage, Lori Bembry Weldon and Walter Hatchett teamed up in the Red Hills region earlier this year to help multi-generational families and new landowners maintain such land stewardship practices.

"Between Walter and I, there are well over 50 years of land experience and all that goes along with helping clients manage and be great stewards to the places we help them sell and buy," says Weldon, a licensed broker associate. Properties have included quail plantations, equestrian estates, ranches, private islands on Georgia's coast, luxury waterfront homes, timberlands and land management, family

farms, and recreational properties, she says.

Their tagline of "Honoring Family Traditions Through Responsible Land Stewardship" sums up the goal of their recent partnership in the South Georgia and North Florida region.

"Walter and I have a commitment to honor those traditions of responsible land stewardship practices that are congruent with preservation and conservation, all of which are deep values of the Red Hills," says Weldon of their family-oriented business.

"We both came from long backgrounds of growing up on the land and learning from our families all of these principles to help pass on land legacies for families or even help create new ones."

Having a well-thought-out plan for who will own your land and how it will be managed after your death ensures that it will be successfully transferred to future generations without being sold or developed. It can also reduce your tax liability. Passing land from one generation to the next while keeping the woodland legacy intact takes work, planning and dedication. Legacy planning is the broader effort that not only encompasses the typical estate plan, but

also articulates the family goals and ways to involve the next generation. Engaging the next generation in the care and enjoyment of your land helps ensure a smooth and successful transition to keep your land intact, in forest and in the family, according to the Georgia Land Conservation Assistance Network.

Not all land is passed down through generations, however, and considering property as an investment is often a great option, says Hatchett. The Georgia Conservation Tax Credit is a financial incentive for landowners to help protect Georgia's natural resources. Landowners who donate fee-title lands or permanent conservation easements to a government entity, state agency, or a Land Trust Alliance-accredited land trust, like Tall Timbers, may apply for a credit against their

state income taxes.

Since 2007, Georgia has allowed taxpayers who make a qualified donation of land or conservation easements to qualified conservation organizations to take a credit against Georgia income taxes. The Georgia law allows a state income

Tall Timbers favors Exemplary Land Stewardship practices.



THE LOBBY
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tax credit for up to 25 percent of the conservation easement value (based on an appraisal). The tax credit is capped at \$250,000 for an individual state income tax payer and up to \$500,000 for many types of corporations. The tax credit is also transferable, which means it can be sold to another Georgia income tax payer. Transferring the tax credit is beneficial for landowners who don't have a large state income tax liability or someone who would prefer cash from the transaction.

For more information, visit talltimbers.com, jonkohler.com, and georgialandcan.org. **TM**



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As a Dynamic Duo, together, Walter Hatchett and Lori Bembry Weldon bring more than 50 years of Experience in the Land Business. As Generational Land Stewards themselves, Lori and Walter bring an Unparalleled Level of Service to the High-quality Land Niche. Contact them for Trusted Knowledge and Advice.



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