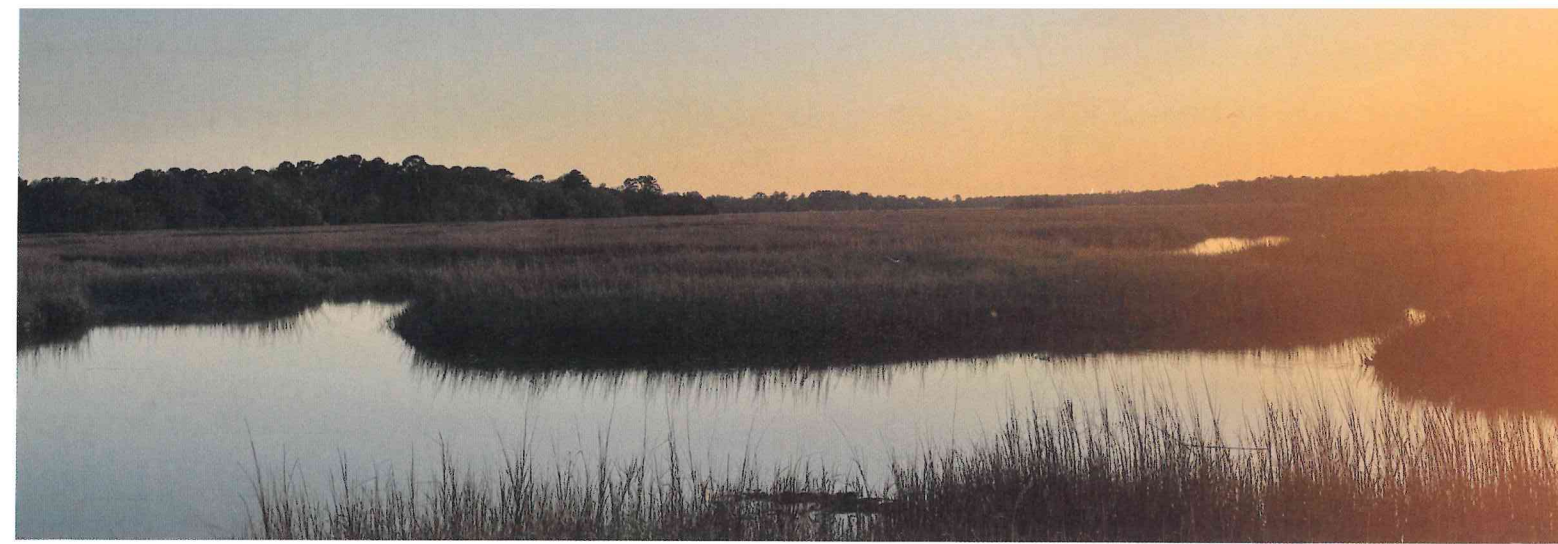


# GETTING CREATIVE FOR CONSERVATION

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, the pace of development on and around Edisto Island is increasing rapidly. More land is being listed, more homes are being built, and speculative real estate investors are getting creative with their development plans. To counter this, the Edisto Island Open Land Trust is getting creative too! In order to try and keep up with this rate of development, we're implementing new strategies to reach out to prospective easement donors and adding some new tools to our conservation tool belt. These creative new ideas will help us best make use of conservation opportunities when they arise and hopefully ensure EIOLT staff can always be actively working on new land acquisition projects.

EIOLT has long made effective use of public funding sources, like the Charleston County Greenbelt Program, to both buy land and reimburse landowners for conservation easements. We plan to keep that effort going and increase the volume if we can. In fact, we currently have three active Greenbelt applications in review. We also want to branch out into utilizing SC Conservation Bank funds in tandem with Greenbelt funds to strengthen those applications and stretch those dollars further. To increase our application volume, we're re-invigorating our prior efforts to meet directly with small groups of landowners in specific areas around the Island to share with them information about land conservation options.

We're also giving deeper consideration to easements on properties much smaller than we historically have worked on, as every acre counts. In parallel with that, EIOLT staff and volunteers are monitoring the real estate market and moving to purchase important undeveloped parcels as they come on the market. We've also received several major private donations from individuals willing to fund certain types of conservation acquisitions directly. Staff are also always networking with our peers, participating in webinars, and attending workshops and conferences in an effort to learn about innovative methods for conserving land, new funding opportunities, and places where we can form partnerships all in the name of keeping Edisto, Edisto.



## FRESH FACES OF THE 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

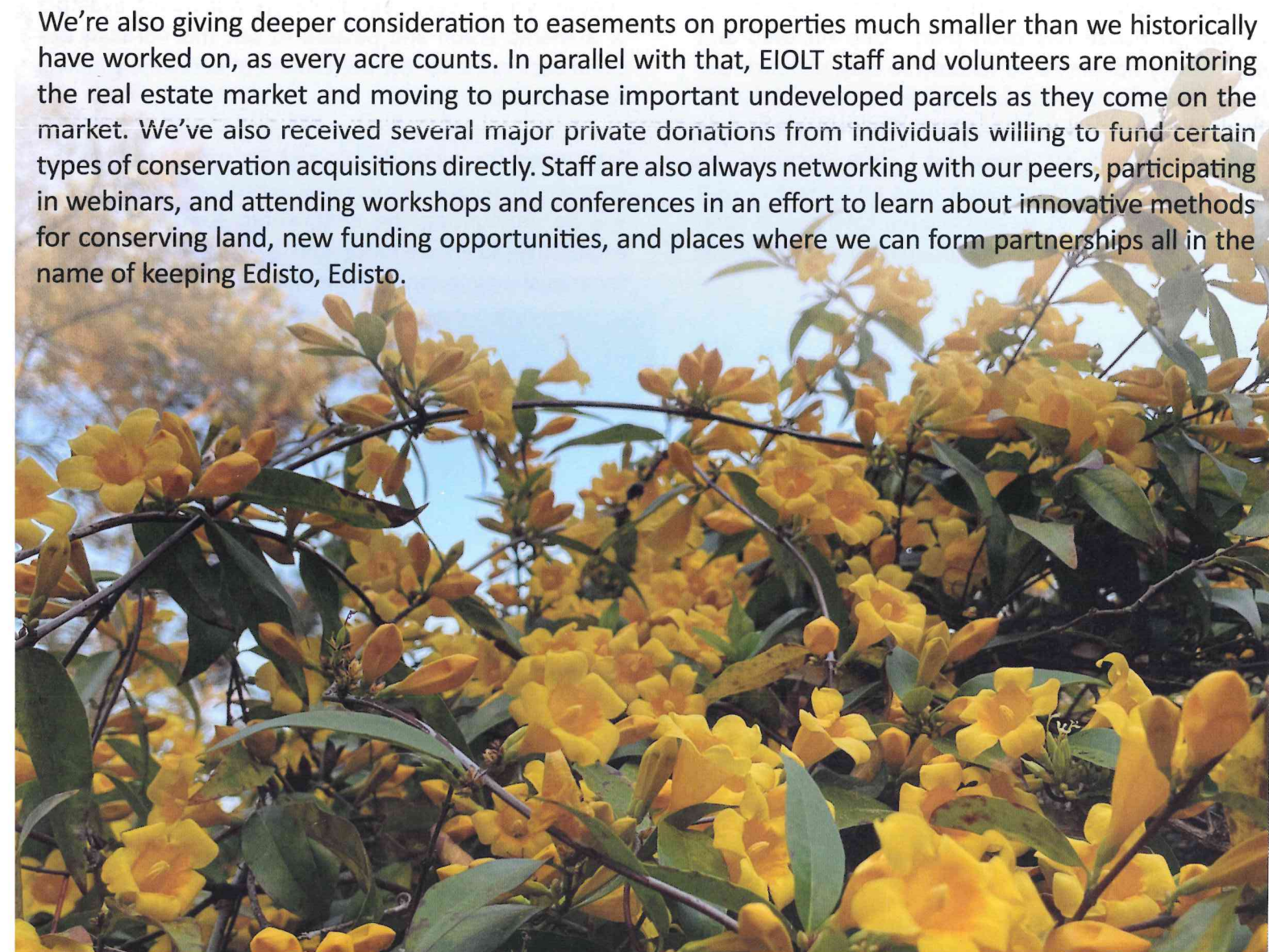
**Peter Beck** is a retired educator from Michigan and property owner on Edisto Beach since 1991. He and his wife, Linda, moved to Edisto permanently in 2013 to retire to the most unique and wonderful place one could imagine. He says, "It is a priority to help preserve the natural beauty of Edisto Island and protect the ecosystem from over development."

**Eleanor Eggleston Ellison** has Edisto roots that run deep. Growing up, she spent every summer on the island, leading to a life-long appreciation of the natural world and a degree in Horticulture from Clemson University. She worked as Director of the Green Industry Expo, a national trade show in the lawn and landscape industry. She is also designated as a SC Statewide Master Naturalist. Passionate about Edisto's rich natural resources and heritage, she and her husband Gill completed their island home in 2017.

**Aaron Justice** lives in Mount Pleasant with his wife Amy and their two daughters, Eloise, 3 years, and Lucy, 15 months. Aaron fell in love with Edisto after spending time at both the beach and on the island. He and his family visit Edisto whenever possible and are excited to be a part of an organization that helps keep the charm and beauty that make Edisto so special.



*"Grateful to see Edisto's biodiversity and culture preserved, I am enthusiastic to have the opportunity to join the Board of the Edisto Island Open Land Trust." - Eleanor Eggleston Ellison*





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Sign up for our eNews at edisto.org

Our Mission: To preserve the rural quality of life on Edisto by protecting lands, waterways, scenic vistas, and heritage through conservation and education.

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*Executive Director*
- Melinda Hester  
*Administrator*
- Tom Austin  
*Land Protection Specialist*
- Tapley Baxter  
*Donor Relations Manager*

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## A TRIUMPH FOR EDISTO'S HERITAGE

We have wonderful news to share! The \$275,000 fundraising goal to fully restore the remainder of the Hutchinson House has been met! One hundred and fifteen (115) donors came forward to help us reach our challenge match last winter, which got us up to \$75,000. That was a huge accomplishment, but then something even more amazing happened. We received an anonymous \$200,000 donation from an individual who wanted to ensure that we reached our total goal as soon as possible, in order to finish this amazing and important project.

The Hutchinson House continues to see one triumph after another. These recent donations are a stunning example of a shared vision and passion to see this heritage site come back to life for the betterment of everyone who will come in contact with it.

Stay tuned for more details and be sure to follow the progress in person or online at edisto.org. Next up, we will be announcing the endowment campaign we are establishing to ensure funds will be available in perpetuity for annual maintenance and management.

This incredible support is humbling, justifying, and probably should have been anticipated, understanding the passion so many of you have to see this national treasure on Edisto come back to life. We are truly grateful. By pairing this \$275,000 with the funding from the National Parks Service African American Civil Rights grant awarded to us last year, we have begun the process required to preserve, restore and replicate all aspects of the house as it stood the day Henry carried his bride Rosa through the front door.

Our amazing team consisting of a Preservation Historian, Architectural Conservator, Structural Engineer, and Architectural firm are all working diligently with our staff and board to compile all the research, develop the preservation plan and complete the construction drawings. Then we will hand the information off to a preservation contractor to begin the work as early as this summer.



Two days of online auction item bidding culminates with a night of fun at Bay Creek Park. Details and ticket information coming in May. Sponsorships and donations are welcomed and appreciated. All event information can be found at edisto.org or email info@edisto.org.



Children peer out of an upper window in the Hutchinson House during a field trip prior to restoration.