

TRUSTEE

A publication of the ALABAMA TRUST for HISTORIC PRESERVATION

FALL 2007

Livingston's Houston-Bailey House gets a face-lift

Shelly Huth • *The Life* (The University of West Alabama) • November 14, 2007

The Houston-Bailey House in Livingston, once listed as a place in peril, recently received a \$100,000 grant from the Wilson Foundation. Dr. Louis R. Smith, Director of the Division of Online Programs at the University of West Alabama, said that the foundation will supply another \$100,000 if they can raise \$200,000 on their own, in grants and services.

Smith said that "the first goal of the grant is to complete the exterior. We are repairing windows and siding, restoring the porch, and painting." The Livingston Presbyterian Church, which owns the house, has made progress even though it may not be visible. "The church has stabilized the foundation, and primed the outside," said Smith who said that the church has also "restored the front porch to its original design."

The Houston-Bailey house has a rich history. It is one of the original houses built in Livingston, and Smith confirms that it was built "by a relative of Sam Houston." Although there is no proof that the more famous Houston spent any time there, Smith said that "there are rumors."

Visits from historical figures aside, Smith said that the building "once housed a girls' school that became The University of West Alabama."

The more recent history of the house involves the Bailey family, who according to Smith "owned the house for most of the 20th century." About six years ago, after the Bailey family owned it, there was a fire, which Smith said "destroyed the back porch, and damaged the inside."



PHOTO Tina N. Jones

The Houston-Bailey House recently received a grant that has allowed for preservation of the structure and its rich history.

After purchasing the house, the church had the Auburn Rural Studio do a historical analysis, and they drew up a restoration plan. Smith said that they are "sticking to that plan, but Auburn didn't know how bad the termite damage was." This damage has pushed back the timetable on the restoration.

Smith said that the church has three main goals for the use of the Houston-

Bailey house, the first of these being "to move their music ministry into the house."

The second goal, said Smith "is to have a food pantry. We want to have canned goods and other non-perishable items, including a freezer, in order to have pre-prepared plates of food ready in case of a disaster."

The third goal is "the most exciting one," according to Smith. "We want to have a tutorial center for kids, using UWA students that need field experience." Smith said that the church is planning to "install computers and having after-school programs."

Smith said that the project should be completed in "about 18 months," and that the members of the church are "very excited." Future plans include tying the house to the church, and installing a kitchen for use as a fellowship hall.

James W. Wilson, Jr. and Wynona W. Wilson Family Foundation was established by the late James W. Wilson and his wife to assist religious and non-

religious community improvement projects and other philanthropic activities. In 1975 Mr. Wilson established the firm of Jim Wilson Associates, Inc., which is currently one of the nation's largest shopping center development firms. Among its many developments was the Riverchase Galleria in Birmingham, the Southeast's largest mixed-use facility.

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

BOARD MEETING

Saturday, January 26, 2008
Edgewood • Chapman, Alabama
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
(lunch will be provided)

Call Monica Moore at (205) 652-3497 for directions and to RSVP by Friday, January 18, 2008.

THE ALABAMA TRUSTEE

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The Alabama Trustee encourages submissions of articles, photographs, and correspondence relating to historic preservation issues within the state of Alabama for consideration in its publication.

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BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Vice honored for tourism efforts in rural Alabama

Arthur McLean • The Thomasville Times • September 20, 2007



Linda Vice

Newly appointed board member for the Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation and Thomasville resident Linda Vice was honored as Tourism Employee of the Year by the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel in the 2007 Alabama Tourism Awards.

Only 12 awards were given this year in a statewide program honoring excellence at the state's \$8.3 billion tourism industry.

"I was quite surprised," Vice said. "Because historically, the state hasn't paid much attention to rural tourism."

But it's clear from talking to Vice, that she believes in rural tourism.

Vice has been working with the Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission, Ala-Tom RC&D and the Center for Economic Development at the University of Alabama to pull together and promote tourism in southwest Alabama.

"We were looking for a way to do community development, and tourism is a natural avenue, because southwest Alabama is a treasure trove, from the original state capitol, we have *To Kill a Mockingbird*, we have Kathryn Tucker Windham, Indian tribes, geology, paleontology and more all here."

But it wasn't always so obvious. "First we had to identify our resources and then convince people we had them! So I did a lot of public speaking, and people would come up to me and tell me about things that I didn't know."

Vice said the natural avenue for tourism in southwest Alabama is cultural and heritage tourism. Vice and the organizations she works with have been working over the past several years piecing together historic trails, black history trails, arts and cultural trails and now they are working on a birding trail.

"The key to tourism is packaging all this," she said of the four-year process.

Along the way there's been pleasant surprises. "When we opened Black Belt Treasures, I thought we'd need to go outside the region to find enough artists, I'm glad to say I was wrong about that."

Vice said that while the Interstates bypassed southwest Alabama to its detriment in the past, it might now be a mixed blessing. "That kind of isolated this area, and the culture hasn't changed much, that makes it a unique place in the world that attracts people."

Vice sees tourism being a part of community and economic development together. "That may well be the greatest contribution of rural tourism," Vice said. "Getting people in communities to better their communities and linking together with other communities for a better region."

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY INTEREST GROUP FORMING...

We are excited to announce that those of you who indicated on your membership survey that you are interested in Architectural History have now had a volunteer to lead the group! Immediate Past President Barbara Adkins will take on this role and has already begun making plans to gather any interested members of the ATHP in Montgomery in January for a two-hour class called "Southern Historic Architecture for Dummies."

Watch for a Louisiana Low Country Architectural Tour being planned for the week of March 20-22. This tour will be offered first to those who have already

registered their affinity for Historic Architecture on their Survey and then opened to general ATHP membership. The tour will be led by Architect, ATHP board member and professor Richard Hudgens and will go from New Orleans into the low country plantation area of Louisiana.

When the e-mail with more information goes out don't miss the opportunity to sign up! This tour will be very limited in number of participants.

If you have not already signed up to be a member of this group you may e-mail Barbara at preservealabama@yahoo.com with your information.

Dear Friends of Preservation,

It is my pleasure to introduce you to your new President, Garland Smith. Garland along with other officers and board members took the leadership reins at the Annual Membership Meeting of the Alabama Trust which took place on Friday, Sept. 21 at the Conference in Huntsville. We now have one of the best boards and executive committees the Alabama Trust has ever had. I am certain that they will make great strides in Alabama's historic preservation in the coming years under Garland's leadership.

I wish to thank each of you for your support of me during the past two years and I know that you will join me in putting all of your preservation efforts and energy behind Garland as she leads us forward.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your President.

Sincerely,
Barbara Adkins
Immediate Past President

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

President looks forward to new year with Trust

It has been an action-packed 2007 with the Alabama Trust, most notably our physical move to the Choctaw Tavern in Livingston. We are delighted with our new office, and executive secretary Monica Newman Moore, the support of the University of West Alabama, and Tina Jones, vice-president of the Alabama Trust, and Director for the Center for the Study of the Black Belt at UWA.

We mounted a very successful conference in Huntsville, chaired by Jerri McClain, Shirley Hammond, Annette Philpo't. We were excited to work with the Alabama Historical Commission, Black Heritage Council and Historic Huntsville Foundation on the entire event. It was highlighted by interesting and informative sessions, tours, networking and reacquainting with state-wide friends. We are so pleased to announce, that thanks to our sponsors we netted 25 percent more than we had budgeted!

However, we still need NEW and RENEWING members. Membership accounts for our operating funds budget. We are good stewards of your monies, and certainly will continue to be, but we need those dues to continue to run the office efficiently. We have been invited to submit a full grant proposal for the Wilson grant offered by the National Trust

for Historic Preservation, of which we are affiliated, called "Partners in the Field". This grant is a challenge grant and requires a one-to-one match. Another criterion of this grant is that we need contributions of major donors (at least \$10,000 per donation, which can be paid over a three-year term). The National Trust is interested in our seeking major donors in our state dedicated to preservation. We are proud to have been asked to submit the full proposal and are hopeful of the field services that would be offered back to you as a result of receiving the grant. Please submit any prospective names to me, which will be held confidentially by telephone 205-967-6841 or e-mail garlands@charter.net. The Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) and the Alabama Trust will be convening in early March to identify potential foundations, corporations, and individuals that we feel we can count on for this effort. We are counting on YOU!

In addition, we are excited to welcome on to the board four new members. Romelia Blackburn of Tuscaloosa, Pat Camp and Peggy Hair both of Birmingham, and Bill Tharpe of Hoover have agreed to join our ranks and help us raise awareness of the importance of preservation in our state and our region. We



Garland C. Smith
garlands@charter.net
TEL: 205-967-6841 • FAX: 205-969-2049

are also pleased that the National Trust for Historic Preservation appointed Sam Frazier of Birmingham and Ann Bedsole of Mobile as NTHP advisors for Alabama. I think both are names that you will recognize as active and lifetime preservationists for our state.

I am excited about 2008, and I hope that you will join us as we travel around the state for our Board meetings this year. We want to get to know you and your worthy efforts that are ongoing in the state of Alabama.

Sincerely,
Garland C. Smith

MEMBER REFLECTIONS

Couple finds new home, passion in Alabama preservation

I wish I could remember the date of my conversion to the cult of Preservation, but I can remember the circumstances. A friend living in Tuscaloosa sent me a newspaper clipping about an upcoming Spring Ramble in the Black Belt, sponsored by an outfit named the Alabama Preservation Alliance. It sounded like fun. Paula and I reserved six seats on the tour, and invited the parents. Was this 1997?

Paula and I live in an old house, not a preserved house, just a humble house. We like it, but at the time of this tour, we really didn't know any preservationists, or anything about the preservation movement. But something happened that Saturday of the Ramble. We met wonderful, passionate, interesting, informed

people on those buses. Our hosts were gracious. The Alliance volunteers were a wealth of knowledge. And before our eyes appeared an Alabama we knew nothing about. History was living right there in front of our eyes, accessible to us as we toured and snooped and asked our silly questions. Paula and I wanted more of this: more of these people with a story to tell, more of these towns rich in history, more of this atmosphere that makes Alabama so unique.

Maybe it was 1998. Anyway, we joined the APA, now the Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation. Gradually, I changed how I approached my day. I got off the Interstate. I took photographs of things that interested me. I visited cemeteries. Took more pictures.

Started a scrapbook of Alabama cemetery monument pictures. Stopped and talked to people throughout this state and listened to their stories. We started eating in joints and quit the franchises, started going to the Farmer's Market. Paula began collecting Southern cookbooks, and I started rescuing threatened Alabama native plants.

Our friends are Preservationists, and I guess we are as well. Neither Paula nor I can claim to be native Alabamians, but we proudly claim Alabama as our home. Thank all of you on that tour. Our life is much richer since that Black Belt Saturday (1999?).

Mike Rushing (St. Clair County)

Alabama Trust finds success in preservation efforts

The Alabama Trust's Relocation to Livingston has proven to be one of the smartest decisions we have made as a group in a number of years. The activities performed by the support team there have replaced what was lost when Pat retired, for far less money. This also allows an Executive Director to be hired to perform the duties of a real Executive Director, real preservation work.

We have sent our letter of intent for the Partners in the Field Grant currently being offered by the National Trust and intend to raise \$150,000 which will be matched by those funds. We will target specific donors to the trust including past donors to the Endangered Properties Trust fund and others. As our letter of intent states, this will be our funding base for this position as well as other outreach programs.

We made the decision this year to change our largest fund raising effort at the conference from a silent auction to two wonderful dinner events and a ramble.

The combination of these three activities is projected to raise more money than the silent auction by far, as well as less work for the board and staff of the ATHP. We have also chosen to combine our Ramble with the Conference to attract more attendees for both.

Friend and fund raising has been enhanced by the formation of interest groups within the larger organization. This plugs us into a broader base of constituents not only to further our mission, but for funding. Each member has been asked to complete a survey prepared by one of our members which indicate their particular field of interest within or relating to preservation. We currently have three active interest groups with volunteer leaders within the organization;

- Historic Gardens,
- Historic Textiles
- Historic Architecture

Two of the groups had sessions scheduled at the conference specifically

driven by their interest area. There is a garden tour planned in Selma for the spring of 2008, which will be the second this group has organized. The Architecture group has plans for a "Historic Architecture for Dummies" class as well as a Spring 2008 tour. We are currently soliciting leadership for other interest groups such as people that are interested in bungalows, lofts, commercial buildings, churches, etc.

The Alabama Trust currently has approximately 250 dues-paying memberships with more than 400 on our mailing list.



Alabama Preservation Issues we see as pressing:

- ❖ *The I-10 bridge project in Mobile*
- ❖ *Lack of funds for properties owned by the State of Alabama and managed by the AHC*
- ❖ *State Main Street Program*
- ❖ *Graying of the preservation population and constituency in the state*

Save the Date

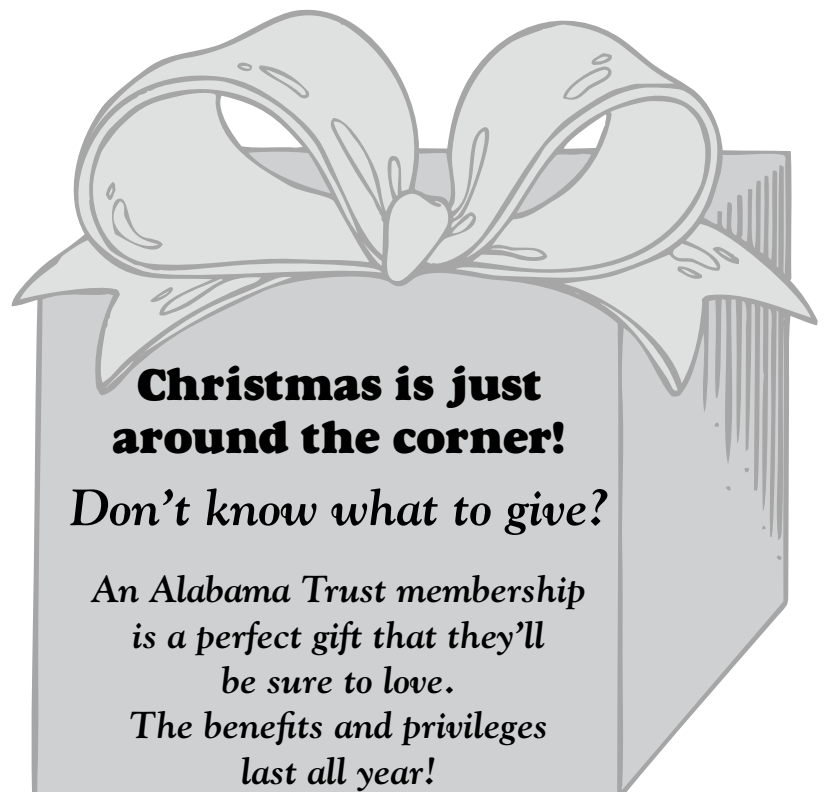
ATHP SPRING GARDEN TOUR 2008

Beautiful Spring gardens of azaleas, dogwood, daffodils, pansies and other wonderful flowers in a lovely historic setting of antebellum and Victorian homes can be enjoyed

when you join us for the ATHP Spring Garden Tour in conjunction with the Selma and Dallas County Historic

Spring Pilgrimage on Saturday, March 15, 2008, in Selma, Alabama. Selma will be in its finest as we tour historic gardens and hear from her own Kathryn Tucker

Windham, the renowned story teller. Come earlier on Friday and enjoy the outstanding homes on tour with the Historic Spring Pilgrimage. It is sure to be a great weekend in one of Alabama's most treasured historic cities. Watch the ATHP newsletter for further details and go ahead and mark your calendar for March 14-15, 2008. You will not want to miss this fantastic event!



Garden Group visits historic gardens at Tennessee Valley conference

The conference in the Tennessee Valley was a huge success. The Conference featured a lecture on historic gardens by Harvey Cotton of the Huntsville Botanical Gardens. Donna Castellano of the Historic Huntsville Foundations shared her fundraising expertise using a garden book to generate money for local historic preservation. Many of us took home a copy of Donna's book *Through the Garden Gate*. The beautiful and historic Lowe garden in the Twickenham Historic Garden District was open to visitors. The weather was perfect, and many of us used part of the weekend to stroll the district and enjoy the houses and gardens.

The Garden Group is growing. Several members asked to be put on our e-mail list. Anyone would like to be a part of the group should contact Mike Rushing. He can make accommodations for those

without e-mail, so give him a call at (205) 338-3680.

Plans for next year are underway. ATHP will have a Spring Garden Tour in conjunction with the Selma and Dallas County Historic Spring Pilgrimage on Saturday, March 15, 2008. Please see the write-up elsewhere in this newsletter. Gery Anderson (gadmd2@aol.com) is your contact for this event.

The Garden Group will sponsor a spring picnic in the Montgomery area for the ATHP membership. Our dates are not yet firm, but plan to see us in the Spring for fellowship and open gardens. Our date will be ready by the next newsletter. For more information, garden news, or suggestions for the historic garden/landscape interest group contact, Mike Rushing, Historic Garden/Landscape Interest Group leader at jmikerushing@coosahs.net.

What's Happening?

Tallapoosa County Historical Home Tour

Camphill, Alabama

December 8, 2007

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

For more information call 256-825-4492

Cuba Tour of Homes

Cuba, Alabama

December 8, 2007

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

For more information call Tanya Storey, 392-5155 or you can get tickets at Lu Lu's Little Havana Gifts and Antique Store in Cuba (next to railroad tracks.)

DID YOU KNOW?

The new IRA Charitable Rollover law allows tax-free transfer of up to \$100,000 from an IRA to a qualified charity. (The Alabama Trust is a 501 (c) 3). The provision is effective only through 2007. If you have reached the age of 70 1/2 and have an IRA, talk to your financial advisor today!

VISIT THE NATIONAL TRUST ON THE WEB
www.nationaltrust.org

TAP INTO THE TRUST

Wouldn't it be fun to...

Have a progressive dinner with ATHP members from your neighborhood, town or county?

Participate in a historic walking tour of Selma, Eufaula or Huntsville neighborhoods?

Attend a workshop on buying antique furniture?

Learn how to date quilts using fabric profiles from different eras?

Network with other bungalow owners about restoration challenges?

Consult with an estate planner about options for your property's future?

Participate in a photography field day with James Agee and William Christenberry in Hale County? Just seeing if you are paying attention!

If any of these activities sound like something you would like to be a part of, it is time for you to contact other members of Interest Groups to have some fun with ATHP.

For more information on Interest Groups, or to request an Interest Group Questionnaire, please contact Paula or Mike Rushing at (205) 338-3680 or jmikerushing@coosahs.net.

Preservation Service
AWARD

James and Chris
PURSELL



Jimmy and Chris Pursell became preservationists inadvertently. While still attending Auburn University, their oldest son purchased the 1853 Moses Hamilton house in the Talladega County community of Fayetteville. He imagined making a quick sale, but when the plan failed the Pursells took over the project of salvaging the old home. For 20 years the house was used to store hay. By 1977 the hay was cleaned out and restoration began. The original purchase of the house and 25 acres has grown into a family business covering over 3500 acres and including several historic properties. On the acreage, efforts continue to restore the forest in a Longleaf Pine habitat.

In 1977, Jimmy and Chris had little idea how preserving one house could affect their lives. Since then they purchased the William Waters House (c. 1830), now a residence for interns in the Farm Links horticulture program and its headquarters, and several other historic structures that dot the landscape of the Farm Links golf course in Fayetteville developed by the Pursell family. On a yearly basis hundreds of visitors witness the successful integration of the old and the new.

Gwyn C. Turner
AWARD

Elizabeth Ann
BROWN



The story goes that as a small child Elizabeth Brown was given a copy of *Antebellum Homes of Alabama*. For 17 years she has served Alabama and preservation as a staff member of the Alabama Historical Commission. She currently manages the Historic Preservation Division and serves as Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer. Elizabeth also filled the role of interim director.

She holds a bachelor of architecture and a master's in community planning from Auburn University. She serves on the advisory council for the graduate program in planning at Auburn University and the board of Design Alabama, a nationally recognized organization that promotes the design arts. She was involved with the development of the Alabama Communities of Excellence program and Your Town, two programs designed to help small towns.

In the spirit of Gwyn Turner and her many years of service, the Alabama Trust presents its highest honor to Elizabeth Brown.

Restoration
AWARD

Blake and Bettie
FIELD



Restoring one historic home is usually enough for most people. Not so for Blake and Bettie Field. The couple is currently working on their tenth restoration project. Although born in Boston, Massachusetts, Blake “returned home” 25 years ago to live in the house his grandfather John Miller Bonner built in Wilcox County. Married for 23 years, Blake and Bettie make a great preservation team. Thanks to their efforts, eight houses along Broad Street in Camden—one dating to 1825—are now restored and part of a rejuvenated neighborhood.

It is not uncommon to see the Fields riding in their golf cart with “Shy Dog,” the family pet, inspecting the houses they so carefully brought back to life. Their current project is a Sears catalog home which they view as a giant jigsaw puzzle. The community can't resist riding by to check the progress and to see yet another house blossom due to the careful tending of the Fields.

**ALABAMA TRUST
ONLINE**

www.alabamatrust.info

Rehabilitation
AWARD

Davis

ARCHITECTS

Davis Architects rehabilitated the Birmingham Electric Battery Company facility, built in 1926 as an automotive garage and warehouse specializing in battery maintenance, to house their new offices. Conducted as a tax credit project, the Moorish-inspired building was restored with the original neon signs rebuilt into working order. The nine roof-top skylights were carefully disassembled and rebuilt to be identical in appearance and construction of the original units. The exterior is faithfully restored to bring continued life to the steel windows and interesting bi-fold garage doors. Throughout the vibrant new setting it is still possible to 'read' the original building. Davis Architects did a powerful job of turning a beautiful warehouse into a viable building in an area that is emerging as an architectural/design hub.



TAGS FOR PRESERVATION

For over a year The Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation (ATHP) has been working and planning for a license plate for preservation.

When Professor Clark Lundell head of Auburn University Industrial Design Department was contacted, two students a Mr. Hicks and Mr. Allen were assigned to work on this project. Prototypes of several tags were displayed at the annual meeting held in Huntsville in September. Pledge sheets were placed on each table for interested parties to sign. In Alabama one thousand tags have to be pre-sold before the State will start the manufacturing process. At the annual meeting over one hundred and thirty tags were pledged--- a great start. At this time the Trust is only asking for names of those interested in pledging to purchase a tag. If you are interested please complete the form below return it to us.

These tags for preservation can be a rallying point for all the grass roots organizations in Alabama. What a wonderful way to promote preservation throughout our great state. *Who doesn't read tags?*

To make a pledge call Monica Moore at 205 652-3497

OR

mail this form to
Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation
UWA Station 45
Livingston, AL 35470

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Number of Tags: _____



ALABAMA TRUST for HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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Already a member who would like to contribute more? Remember, Alabama Trust is a 501 (c) 3 organization, and all donations are tax deductible and greatly appreciated. Our year-end appeal is helpful for meeting the needs of operation expenses.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

ALABAMA TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
Station 45 • Livingston, AL 35470

Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation is the voice for the future of Alabama's historic buildings, neighborhoods and places. We invite you to join us. Member benefits include quarterly newsletters with event listings and the latest preservation news; opportunities for preservation conferences; organized tours statewide; networking opportunities with other preservation minded people; a statewide advocacy program for preservation.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____

Your membership contributions and gifts are tax deductible to the extent of the law. Please make your check payable to Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation, or choose one of the following:

MC/Visa # _____

Exp. date _____ Signature (as it appears on card) _____

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- _____ Preservation Partner \$25 - \$44 (Individual)
- _____ Preservation Partners \$45 - \$99 (Family)
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- _____ Benefactor \$1,000 - \$2,499
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* _____ This is a gift membership