

Upstate Forever conservation easements in the Landrum/Tryon vicinity. As of December, 2004, the organization had protected nearly 2,000 acres in this region alone.

Wallace earns top Land Steward award

by Chris Dailey

Madelon Wallace says protecting the scenic and historic 1,265-acre Fairview Farm near Landrum was one of the most rewarding accomplishments in her life.

Now the accomplishment is earning her more rewards.

Wallace, the co-owner of Walker, Wallace & Emerson Realty, has been named the Land Steward of the Year by Upstate Forever, a nonprofit organization dedicated to land conservation.

Upstate Forever, which manages a land trust program for seven counties in Upstate South Carolina, recently presented the top honor to Wallace at its annual meeting.

"I was very proud and touched to get the award and it means a great deal to me," says Wallace. "I had spent all my adult life at Fairview and my husband had managed the farm

since 1956 when it was purchased by Fairview Farm, Inc. and JoJo Del Guercio, (so) protecting this significant tract of land was of major importance to me."

In a press release issued regarding the awards, Upstate Forever said, "Madelon Wallace had a vision to protect the 1,260-acre Fairview Farm, a place of great biological diversity and stunning scenic beauty in northern Spartanburg County.

"When the owners were not interested in preserving the property, Wallace put her own money at risk in securing an option to purchase and then assembled a group of buyers in an extremely complex conservation deal."

Upstate Forever adds that the deal, concluded in 2000, has become a model for similar "con-

servation developments" and led to several more in the area in recent years.

Such developments allow landowners to realize some economic gain on the property while also permanently protecting the land.

In the case of Fairview Farm, Wallace said she knew she had to do something when she learned that the property might

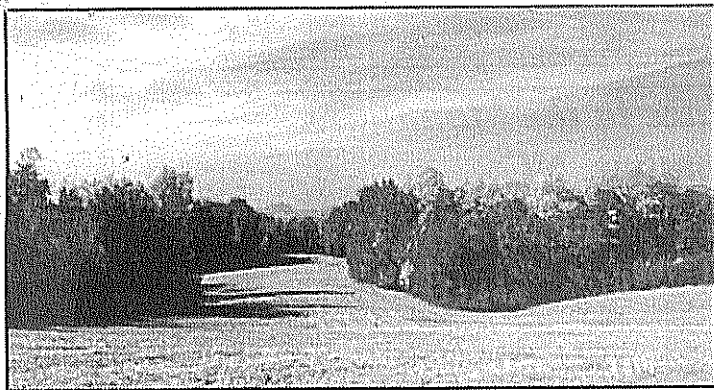
be going into the hands of developers. The property is located a short distance from the intersection of Hwy. 14 and I-26.

At the time, Wallace said it looked as though the 1,265 acres of "beautiful pastures, hardwoods and lakes" could become covered with "everything from strip malls to condos."

"I had to put my money



MADOLON WALLACE



A view of some of the 1,265 acres of land at Fairview Farm in Landrum, which is now protected under a conservation easement. (photo submitted)

• Wallace

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

where my mouth was and take a risk," she says.

Wallace worked with Herbert (Bud) Myers to form Greenspace of Fairview LLC, a South Carolina limited liability company. The company then raised the money to purchase Fairview Farm from 11 shareholders who responded

to a private securities offering.

Remarkably, Greenspace was able to purchase the property at market value "with no angles or special deals," says Wallace.

"We actually paid more than the developers were offering," she says.

The land use plan for Greenspace of Fairview LLC calls for over 70 percent of the property, about 885 acres, to be permanently restricted as open space.

The remainder of the land was set aside for 12 residential farms and three agricultural tracts, ranging in size from 25 to 60 acres. The 12 residential farms are limited to one residence and restricted by the conservation easement from further development. The easement for the entire property was granted to Upstate Forever.

Fairview Farm has a storied

history not only as a farm, but as a place for breeding horses and cattle and training top race horses.

The farm (then known as the Emerald Bar S) was purchased from Harry M. Sloate and the Sloate Corp. in 1956 by Eligio (Jo Jo) Del Guercio, who had searched for land in the Southeast for many months before selecting it for its fertile soil, ideal for cattle and horses.

Fairview Farm (the farm was renamed by Del Guercio) was involved in the horse and cattle business and agricultural farm-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

• Wallace

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

ing. The farm had such stallions as Night Lark, Catch On Fire and Blue Murmur standing at stud, and raised and sold many champion hunters and jumpers.

In 1971, Fairview Farm added a 3/4-mile racetrack, which became its primary business for the next 25 years. The farm was nationally recognized as a training center and produced many graded stakes winners. Two Eclipse Award winners, Chris Evert and Turkoman, had early training there.

Fairview Farm, which borders the Pacolet River and has views of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is also noted for its wealth of natural resources.

The farm is home to several rare plants, significant stands of hardwoods along the river and an old growth, self-replicating forest visited regularly by college science classes. Wallace says she received significant

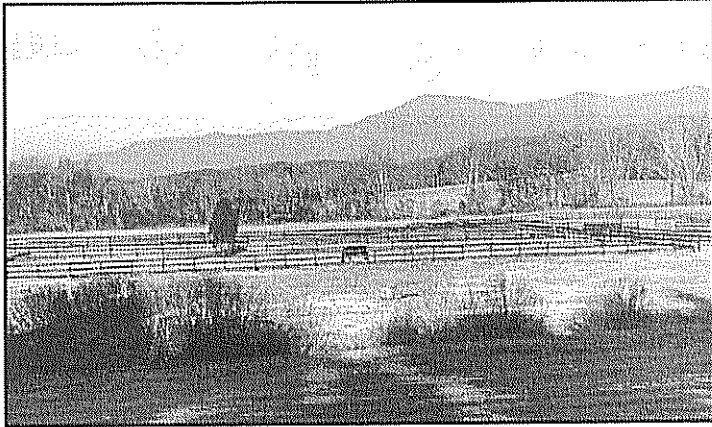
help from several people to conclude the conservation deal and preserve the land's unique natural character.

She says Myers and Stewart Winslow were instrumental in making the project happen. She adds that she tapped the vast knowledge and expertise of Brad Wyche, executive director of Upstate Forever and Cary Hall, attorney with the Wyche Firm in Greenville, who provided "terrific advice and guidance."

Following the success of the Fairview project, Wallace says the team formed Greenspace Consultants, LLC, a small company that plans and implements conservation easements.

The company has done the work that resulted in conservation of "The Cotton Patch" property and Bronze Ridge Farm, both in Polk County. The 156-acre Bronze Ridge Farm, part of the area known as "Old

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 13)



Another view of land at Fairview Farm that is now protected under a conservation easement. (photo submitted)

• Wallace

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

Hunt Country" overlooks the Pacolet River and includes rolling pastures and woodlands. The Cotton Patch

is a 403-acre property outside Tryon with nearly three miles of frontage along both sides of the Pacolet

River. The conservation easement requires that about two thirds of the property remain common open space with no development and allows for no more than eight residential tracts.

The Greenspace Consultants team has protected a total of 1,824 acres through the Fairview Farm, Bronze Ridge Farm, and Cotton Patch conservation easements.

In addition, the conservation of Fairview Farm led to the conservation of Four Columns Farm, located directly across Hwy. 14.

Robert and Marie Gregory granted a conservation easement for the 130-acre historic property to Upstate Forever. The property is the site of the Battle of Earle's Ford, an important Revolutionary War battle won by the Patriots on July 15, 1780.

Wallace says she hopes to see in the future more conservation easements for large tracts of land in the area. She says the

area historically has had mostly rural land surrounding small towns, and it's important to preserve that heritage.

"My hope is that more open space will be preserved in the

"I want this area to be a place I still want to live in 10, 20 and 30 years from now."

— Madelon Wallace

future and all the new development that will occur in our area is planned and is not random and short sighted," says

Wallace. "I want this area to be a place I still want to live in 10, 20 and 30 years from now."