

St. Michael's goal down to \$100,000

By Ruth Luse, Managing Editor
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"We're so close, but we're not there yet," said Jo-Ann Munoz, D&R Greenway

March 8: Just a week to go to raise the remaining \$100,000 needed to Advertisement
complete the funding package to purchase the St. Michael's property. The
deadline is March 15.

On March 1, the goal was \$202,000.

Support from private donors for the preservation of the 337-acre St. Michael's tract,
just south and east of Hopewell Borough, has been immediate and impressive to say
the least, considering that the D&R Greenway Land Trust needed \$1,500,000 in early
February.

Four weeks ago, the D&R Greenway needed \$500,000. That was because the
Willard T.C. Johnson Foundation made a promise to donate \$1 million — if \$500,000
more could be raised by the deadline.

As of late February, the goal was down to \$330,000, thanks to the Friends of
Hopewell Valley Open Space, which has committed \$100,000, and the Stony Brook-
Millstone Watershed Association, which has committed \$50,000.

"As with the \$1,000,000 commitment from the Willard T.C. Johnson Foundation,
these donations will be made available only to close the gap and complete the \$11
million public-private funding package needed to acquire the land," Jo-Ann C. Munoz,

As of March 1, the D&R Greenway had received another contribution, \$100,000 from an anonymous private donor. At that point, Ms. Munoz said, "D&R Greenway Land Trust has raised \$2,798,000 in private funds and, with 15 days to go until our contract with the diocese expires, we still need to raise \$202,000 to complete the \$11 million purchase price."

With their collective fingers crossed, D&R Greenway officials waited again for more good news. They got it. Since the last update, "D&R Greenway has received five, five-figure private donations — as well as about 30 smaller gifts from individuals throughout the community. These new contributions totaled just under \$100,000. This figure also includes a \$500 donation from the volunteers of the Hopewell Fire Department and Emergency Medical Unit," said Ms. Munoz.

To date, D&R Greenway has received donations from over 450 individuals, families and business in the Hopewell area.

"We would like to express our deepest thanks and appreciation to each and every one of them for their support. This is a wonderful example of a community working together on a cause that will benefit everyone," Ms. Munoz added.

And to top that off, on Monday, The Brothers Moon benefit wine-tasting and auction raised over \$15,000 for the preservation project.

"This means that we have less than \$100,000 to go to complete the funding package to purchase the St. Michael's property," Ms. Munoz said gleefully Tuesday.

To close this gap, "we ask that that people attend the fundraisers scheduled for March 9 and 11, or continue to send their donations to D&R Greenway. Both the

Hopewell Family Barn Dance and the musical events at Music Together will provide great times and great entertainment — but also, provide the dollars we still need to save St. Michael's. We're so close, but we're not there yet," Ms. Munoz concluded.

Those who want to help can find details about the remaining March events in HELP SAVE ST. MICHAEL'S TRACT column (www.hopewellvalleynews.com).

To make a direct donation, send a check, payable to D&R Greenway Land Trust, to One Preservation Place, Princeton, 08540. Donations may be made by using Visa or MasterCard or by calling D&R Greenway at 924-4646.