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## Stopgap effort keeps Kent barn standing

BY LYNN MELLIS WORTHINGTON Republican-American  
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*Kent Land Trust has been inviting residents to color in an image of the iconic barn. Children from Kent Center School added their efforts to the ongoing mural Friday. Lynn Mellis Worthington Republican-American*

KENT – The sounds of hammers and saws mingled with the giggles of Kent Center School students as Hudson Valley Preservation workers spent the entire day Friday stabilizing the iconic barn in one of the Kent Land Trust fields just south of town.

Mason Lord, who is the founder and managing partner of Hudson Valley Preservation, provided his crew's work pro bono to the land trust.

"We'll end up with a building that has gone from critical condition to life support," Lord said. "We're preventing a catastrophic failure." As he pointed to the cross beams holding the roof up, Lord explained that there were cracks and rot in the wood that are impacting the structure's integrity.

"It has dropped off about 11 inches," he added. "With a heavy snow load, the whole thing (could) collapse." This was not designed to be a renovation project but just a stopgap measure to keep it standing, he said.

"We're cabling to keep the barn from listing any more," Lord said. "What we're not doing is repairing rotten posts."

He anticipates there will be an ongoing conversation with Kent Land Trust about what it wants to do with the barn in the future. The structure is located behind the Kent Greenhouse and next to Kent Center School. It was obtained with the land when it was purchased in 1994 and is now part of the Southern Gateway Preserve.

The barn can be seen as one drives from the south into the center of Kent and it is a favorite view of many. The land trust is continuing to collect stories about its origin. Al Pirozzoli of Pirozzoli Marketing is creating a documentary film about the barn and the stabilization project on a pro bono basis. He was on site Friday with cinematographer Anthony DeMaio.

"I've always had an interest in barns and I paint barns as an artist," Pirozzoli said. "There's something about barns that is quite unique. If you go back in time, the economic indicators across this land were how big your barns were and how full they were."

The actual history of the land trust barn is a mystery. There is a belief that it was a tobacco barn and part of a collection of barns on the site.

The uniqueness of the barn with its lack of wooden sides appeals to people.

"It is kind of a sculpture that time has sculpted," Pirozzoli said.

Pirozzoli will write and direct the film and he hopes that public television will be interested in it.

Land Manager Mike Benjamin of the Kent Land Trust shared information with students from Kent Center School about the project from under a tent a safe distance away from the workers. He showed remnants of farming implements made of both metal and leather that Lord found as they were preparing the site.

Students also added their artistic touches to the ongoing mural that has been created of the barn.

The land trust is collecting stories about the barn. Anyone who has information or photos about the barn from over the years is asked to send them to [info@kentlandtrust.org](mailto:info@kentlandtrust.org).



Mike Benjamin of Kent Land Trust shows second-graders from Kent Center School some of the metal and leather items that were found in the historic barn Friday. Lynn Mellis Worthington Republican-American



Ian Schwaendt, left, and Joe Urso of Hudson Valley Preservation take a measurement on the Kent Land Trust barn Friday. The firm provided pro bono services for one day to stabilize the iconic barn. Lynn Mellis Worthington Republican-American



Workers from Hudson Valley Preservation work on the stabilization of the Kent Land Trust barn Friday. Lynn Mellis Worthington Republican-American



Ian Schwaendt, left, and Mason Lord of Hudson Valley Preservation work on the Kent Land Trust barn Friday. The firm provided pro bono services for one day to stabilize the iconic barn. Lynn Mellis Worthington Republican-American

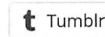
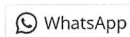
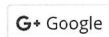


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Mason Lord of Hudson Valley Preservation watches a slow motion video Friday taken by Anthony Demaio of Go Nation Video, along with Al Pirozzoli of Pirozzoli Marketing. A documentary video is being made by the marketing firm about the Kent Land Trust barn and the stabilization project. Lynn Mellis Worthington Republican-American

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