

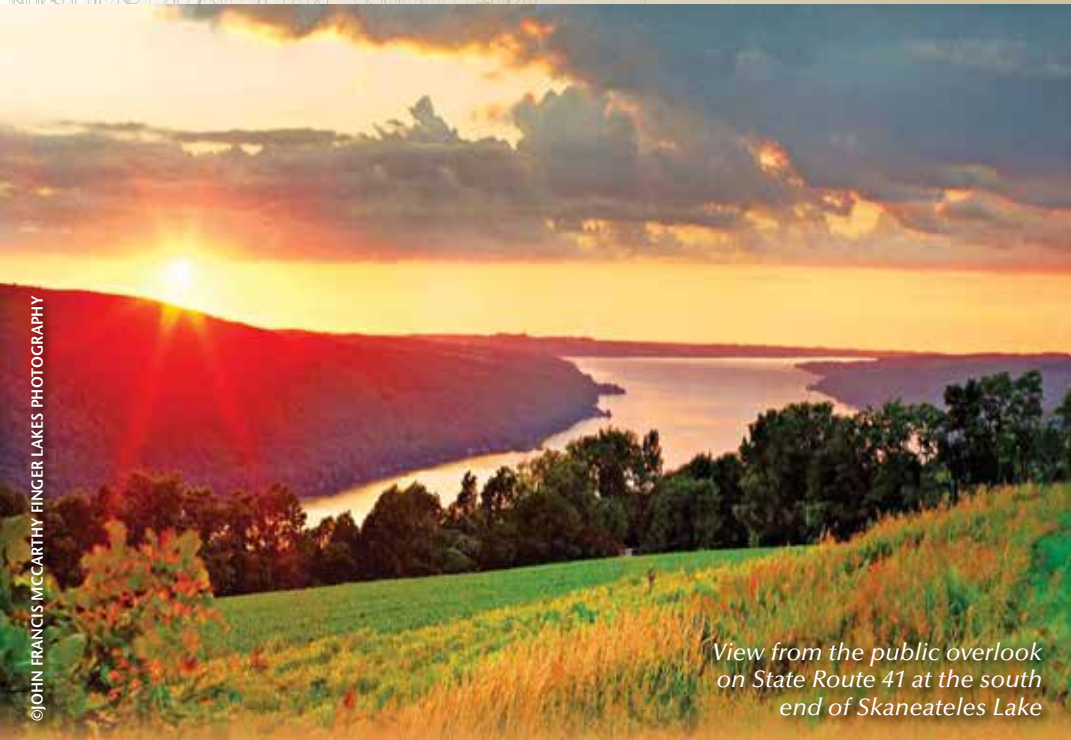


# The Land Steward

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST

working to protect the natural integrity of the Finger Lakes region

Vol. 27, No. 3 • Summer 2015



©JOHN FRANCIS MCCARTHY FINGER LAKES PHOTOGRAPHY

View from the public overlook on State Route 41 at the south end of Skaneateles Lake

## Acquisition Buffers Iconic Overlook Near Skaneateles Lake

*Perched on a high ridge overlooking Skaneateles Lake, State Route 41's scenic overlook at the Cortland-Onondaga County line is well known for affording one of the best vistas in the Finger Lakes region. The panoramic view of the lake and its surrounding hillsides is awe-inspiring.*

The overlook lies at the heart of the Land Trust's Skaneateles Highlands Protection Project. By working with landowners and a variety of other partners, the Land Trust intends to create a greenbelt at the south end of Skaneateles Lake, extending from State Route 41 on the east side to State Route 41A on the west side. Recent protection projects, such as the Hinchcliff Family Preserve and the Cora Kampfe Dickinson Preserve, are key building blocks.

The Land Trust very recently acquired a significant parcel, one of two privately owned tracts bordering the overlook. The new parcel lies in close proximity to High Vista Nature Preserve, one of the Land Trust's oldest preserves.

The Land Trust moved to acquire the parcel primarily to maintain the scenic integrity of the overlook. But the purchase also sustains a hope that additional acquisitions in the area will ultimately create a corridor of conserved lands providing a trail linking the scenic overlook and the High Vista Preserve.

Assembling a greenbelt of the scale envisioned by the Skaneateles Highlands Protection Project requires patience and selectivity, and even small pieces of land

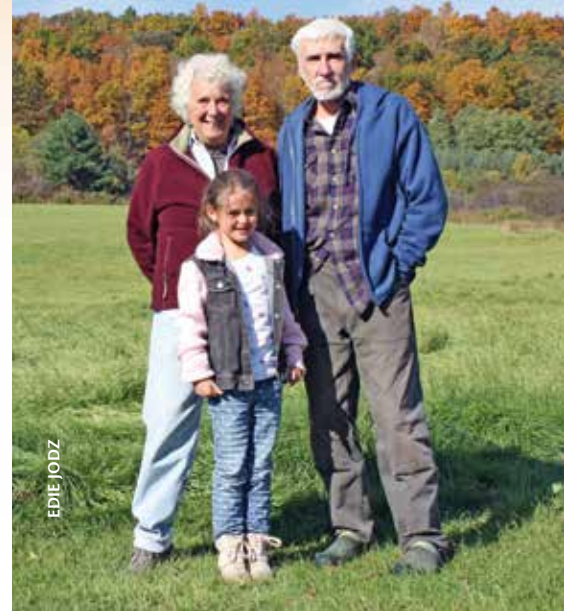
*continued on page 2*

## Over 100 Acres Next to National Forest Protected: A Conservation Trifecta

When the Land Trust considers accepting a conservation easement from any landowner, each project is evaluated on its merits. We do this because with each new easement or preserve, we are expanding our long term responsibilities to the land. In order to match our capacity to our growing responsibilities, we ask many questions, including these very important ones: Is the property next to other conserved lands? Is the property of significant size to make a difference in its conservation neighborhood? Would protecting this property support broader conservation goals and objectives?

In the case of the Melveney family lands in Burdett, Schuyler County, the answer to each is, absolutely! *continued on page 3*

*Diane and Neal Melveney with their granddaughter Emily*



EDIE JODZ

*My daughter Bella knows it only as “the boardwalk”—the place we go to catch and release salamanders and polliwogs, spy on minnows, hear the croak of a heron, and always watch for the elusive beaver who remain nearby, snug in their lodges.*

I know it as the northern portion of the Roy H. Park Preserve. Located in eastern Tompkins County, this preserve serves as the first link in the Emerald Necklace, a greenbelt that will ultimately link 50,000 acres of public open space. The land also helps maintain the quality of Ithaca’s drinking water supply, and provides a network of trails that are popular for hiking, birding, and cross country skiing.

The leadership of the Land Trust thought long and hard before making the significant financial commitment to build the boardwalk, which spans Six Mile Creek and its associated wetlands. We carefully weighed the benefits associated with making this area more accessible alongside the costs, both financial and ecological.

In the end, thanks to strong financial support from the community, we proceeded with construction and the boardwalk is now associated with a trail that links our Park Preserve with adjacent Hammond Hill State Forest and its extensive network of multi-use trails.



ANDY ZEPP

*Bella Zepp on the boardwalk*

Now, when my wife and I realize that Bella has spent too much screen time on the family I-Pad, we head out to explore her favorite of the Land Trust’s ever-growing network of preserves and conservation areas.

Every time we visit the boardwalk, or any other Land Trust preserve, I marvel at the way that children can so totally immerse themselves in learning about nature and simply enjoy the great outdoors. Whether they are pursuing crayfish or fireflies, building a temporary stone dam on a creek, or racing through the woods to be first to the top of the hill, kids can’t get enough of the outdoors.

With the sunny days here, take your child, grandchild, niece or nephew out to one of our preserves and let them

get good and muddy! You’ll be glad you did. To find a nature preserve near you, just go to [www.fllt.org](http://www.fllt.org).

Andrew Zepp  
Executive Director, Finger Lakes Land Trust

## Acquisition Buffers Iconic Overlook Near Skaneateles Lake *continued from cover*

*Assembling a greenbelt of the scale envisioned by the Skaneateles Highlands Protection Project requires patience and selectivity, and even small pieces of land such as the newly acquired one can be an important piece of a larger puzzle.*

such as the newly acquired one can be an important piece of a larger puzzle.

The purchase was made possible by funds from the Land Trust’s *Shoreline to Summit* campaign and additional fundraising for the project is underway. To make a donation in support of this project, please contact Kelly Makosch at (607) 275-9487 or [kellymakosch@fllt.org](mailto:kellymakosch@fllt.org).

The land will continue to be farmed as the Land Trust works on the protection of additional land in this area. Within the Skaneateles Highlands, the organization is also currently working on the completion of a conservation easement that will buffer a key tributary to Skaneateles Lake as well as an addition to Bear Swamp State Forest.

The creation of networks of conserved land is a primary focus of the Land Trust. In addition to our efforts at the south end of Skaneateles Lake, similar projects are underway to create greenbelts at the south end of Canandaigua Lake, as well as an arc extending around Ithaca. Creating a corridor of conserved lands along the Finger Lakes Trail is also a priority.

*The Land Trust gratefully acknowledges Attorney David Tyler of Ithaca, NY for providing pro bono legal services in support of this project.*

## Over 100 Acres Next to National Forest Protected *continued from cover*

The property sits, like a keystone, between two blocks of the Finger Lakes National Forest. By conserving this land, the Melveney family has assured that the habitat across this gap in public ownership will remain available for wildlife. The easement terms allow the land to be used for both sustainable forest and agricultural management. This kind of land use provides important habitat for animals as they move across the landscape. At more than 100 acres, the Melveney property is large enough to support a viable farm operation, two homes, and plenty of habitat for local, as well as traveling, wildlife.

Jody Vanselow, the District Ranger of the Finger Lakes National Forest, was delighted to hear about the Melveney conservation easement. "We're so thrilled that private landowners are taking steps like this to maintain the character of their land. This easement provides a great buffer to the national forest."

But the conservation value of the Melveney property doesn't end there. The farm is transected by a significant stretch of Tug Hollow Creek, including forested wetlands. The creek is a major tributary to Seneca Lake. A segment of the Finger Lakes Trail also crosses the property from one segment of the National Forest to another. Conservation of the Melveney property contributes to both protecting tributary water quality at Seneca Lake and maintaining the quiet character of a popular segment of the hiking trail. The Melveney easement also supports goals established by both the town and county to maintain the rural, scenic character of the community.

When Neal and Diane Melveney told Land Trust staff that they were interested in donating a conservation easement several years ago, we were thrilled to have the opportunity to work with them. Neal and Diane, both former residents of the New York City metro area, moved to the property, a former dairy farm, in 1971. Diane worked as a math teacher in the Watkins Glen school district and Neal worked as a commercial artist. As their family grew to include four children, they became involved in raising horses, cattle and chickens on the farm. They planted some of the old pastures with Christmas trees. In 1991 their

first sheep arrived, and Neal ultimately gave up his art career to become a full time shepherd of a 150-ewe flock.

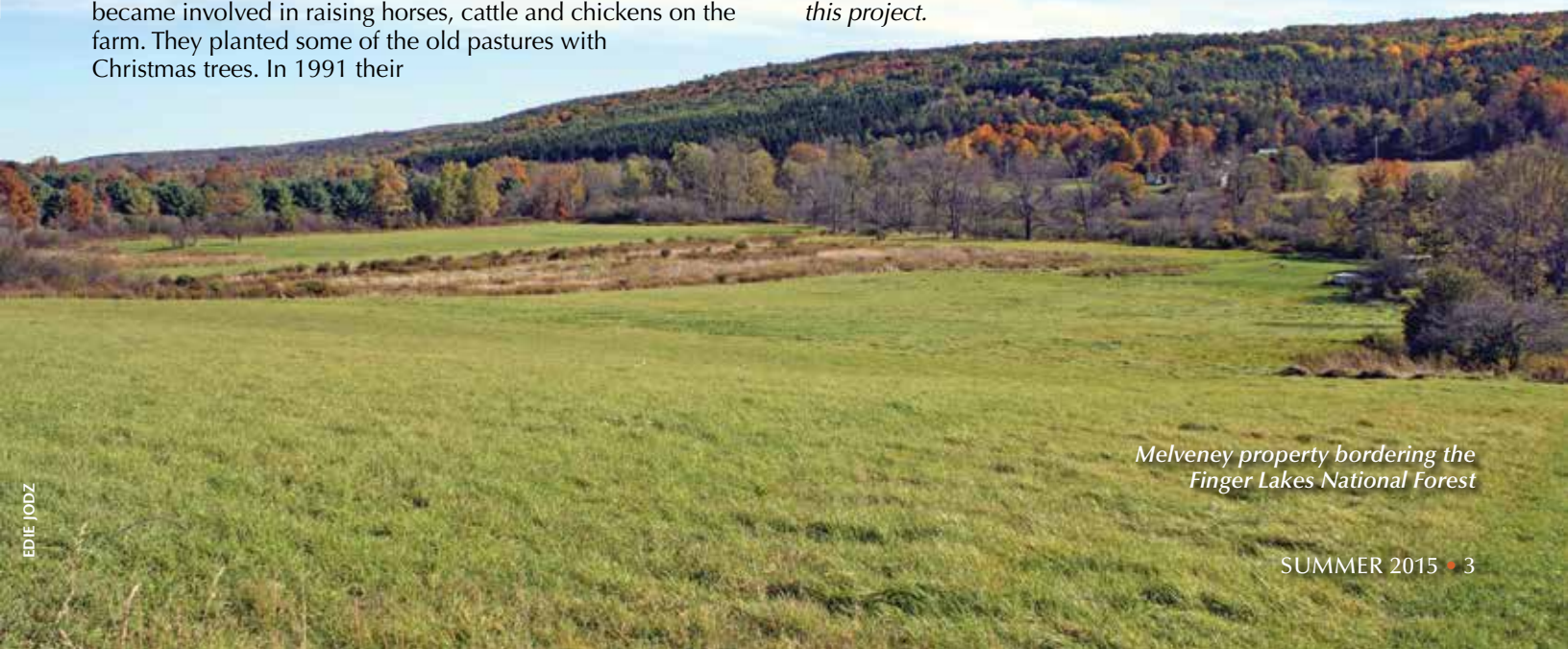
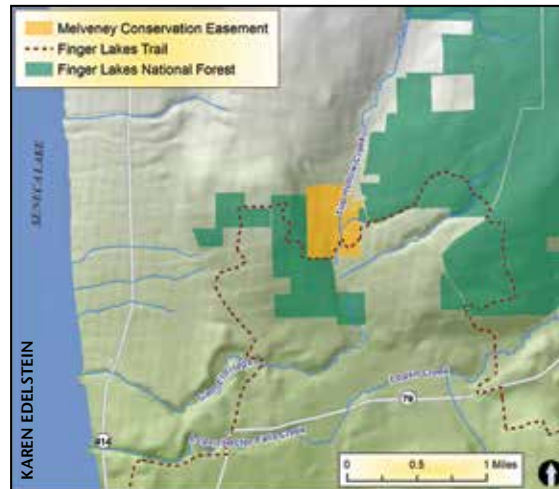
As time passed and their children moved on, Neal and Diane sold off the sheep and started concentrating on their sugar bush, which produces more than 130 quarts of maple syrup each spring. The Christmas tree plantation, now grown into a young forest, still provides greens for holiday wreaths.

Diane and Neal are committed to their farm, which provided a home for their family, a source of income, and space for their children to roam and to discover the natural world. The land has given so much to their lives that the Melveney's want to give something back by protecting their land and work from future developments. "We worked hard to make this the farm that it is today, and we wanted to preserve its integrity and character," Diane said.

The Melveney children, now grown, have all moved to other places, save one. Diane and Neal's son, Chris, built his own home on the property and returned to live there in 2013 with his wife, Lisa, and their daughter, Emily. Before moving from Minnesota's Twin Cities, Emily had only a small back yard in which to play. Chris longed to return to the wide open spaces where he grew up and to provide Emily with a childhood experience similar to his. Since moving back, Emily is starting to learn every nook and cranny of this farm from her parents and grandparents.

And so, we end our story where it started, with another trifecta—three generations of one family enjoying their rural home together. Sharing each other's company, celebrating family traditions, and establishing new ones in the place they all hold dear, happy in the knowledge that the farm will remain for generations yet to come.

*The Land Trust gratefully acknowledges Attorneys John Alexander and Megan Collins and the firm of Sayles & Evans in Elmira, NY for providing pro bono legal services in support of this project.*



*Melveney property bordering the Finger Lakes National Forest*



SJUAN YONG

Spring Bird Quest at Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve

# Spring Bird Quest Highlights

Throughout May 2015, volunteer Mark Chao led bird walks at eleven Land Trust preserves as part of the 10th annual Spring Bird Quest (SBQ). Mark also counted bird species found on additional Land Trust preserves and raised per-species pledges and other donations. With 121 species found, 135 field-trip participants, and at least 65 donations to the Land Trust exceeding \$7100 in all, this was the biggest SBQ ever.

Here are Mark's highlights of the event. For his full report and more photos, please visit <http://www.flit.org/spring-bird-quest-blog-by-mark-chao/>.



MARK CHAO

American Toads in amplexus

## May 2 Wesley Hill Nature Preserve

The surpassing highlight of the day had nothing at all to do with birds. The stage was the old farm pond near Gulick Road. And the players were American Toads (*Bufo americanus*).

I think there were at least 400 toads, or quite possibly more than a thousand, just in the near half of this little pond. They showed a dazzling variety of colors, from dark olive to bright auburn to very pale beige. Many were locked in the mating position called amplexus, in which the male clamps tightly onto the female's back. As she lays her eggs in long strings in the water, he is thus well positioned to fertilize them. The water must have been full of hundreds of thousands of eggs and millions of sperm. In a couple of weeks, the place is going to be just fizzing with tadpoles.

## May 6 Goetchius Wetland Preserve

We most often encounter Spotted Sandpipers at the water's edge, bobbing their tails as they walk here and there. Eventually, they take flight with stiff, shallow, shuddering wingbeats, as if barely able to stay above the water. They are certainly among our most distinctive shorebirds. Some birders would call them cute. Others might deem them comical, awkward, or downright odd.

But today I saw Spotted Sandpipers in a completely new way. One perched up on a rock, chest and shoulders thrust forward, and let out a long, virtuosic song as musical as that of any passerine. After a few seconds, I spied a potential mate watching raptly, just below on the ground. Later I saw these two birds flying together in a dramatic sweeping arc across the whole back fence of the preserve, without labored shuddering wingbeats, but rather with power and grace that I never would have thought possible with this species.



Spotted Sandpiper

MARK CHAO

MARIE READ



SUJAN YONG

May 14  
Roy H. Park Preserve

Black-billed  
Cuckoo



Prairie  
Warbler

## May 24

### *Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve*

The highlight of our group walk—indeed, for many of us, a veritable highlight of our birding lives so far—was an escalating sequence of Black-billed Cuckoo encounters.

First we heard one repeatedly calling nearby, but it refused to show itself or even to divulge its identity with a definitive vocalization. But then we saw one Black-billed Cuckoo on a low open branch in the island of trees at the bottom of the big slope. This bird stayed put for fine scope views. Another cuckoo streamed into view, chasing the other up into a nearer tree. We could see both birds together at rest. More commotion ensued. A couple of our group members conclusively saw a third cuckoo in the scuffle. And then two Black-billed Cuckoos dashed into a shrub right in front of us, and then into another, where at once they provided more excellent views while also proving their incredible capacity for concealment.

It was all just way beyond perfect, with all the rewards of birding wrapped up together—the thrill of an unusual find, the drama of unfolding interactions, the sheer pleasure of watching something very beautiful, and the human bonding from sharing all of this as a group.



May 30  
*Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve*

*SBQ at Ellis Hollow  
Nature Preserve*

SUMMER 2015 • 5

MARK CHAO

# SCENES

from Our Region...



*View of Canandaigua Lake and a portion of the Land Trust's Great Hill Nature Preserve*



*A spring day in Grimes Glen County Park in Naples, Ontario County. The Land Trust helped the county acquire this site and retains a conservation easement on the park.*

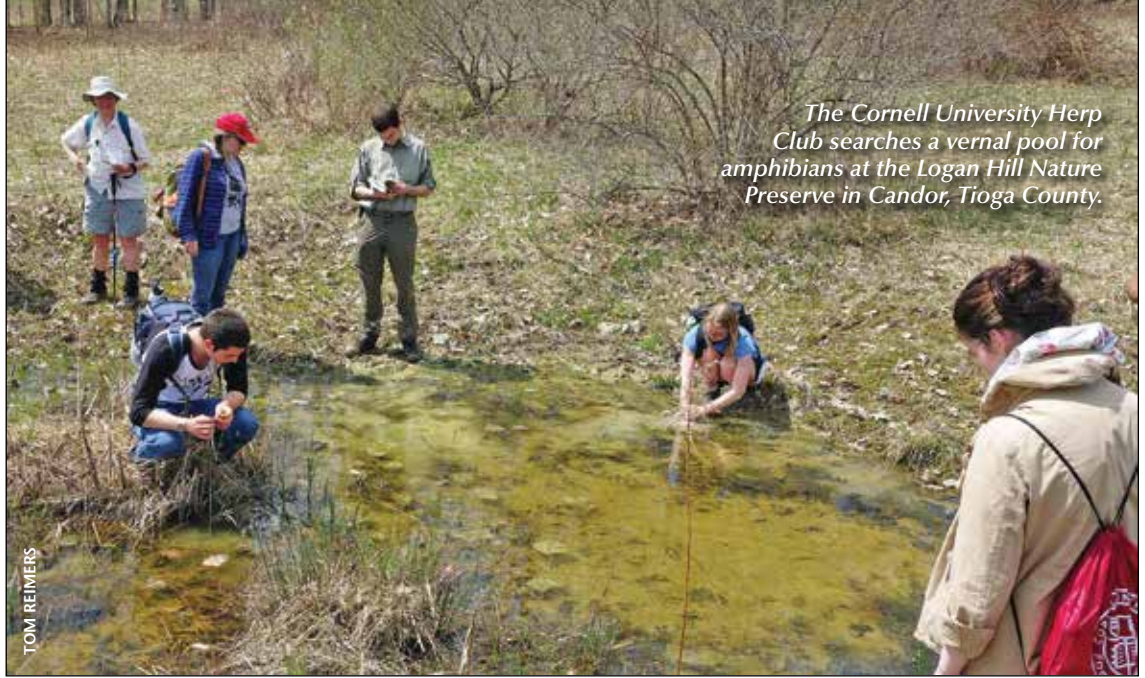
NIGEL KENT

JASON GORMAN

BOB BRANCATO



NIGEL KENT



The Cornell University Herp Club searches a vernal pool for amphibians at the Logan Hill Nature Preserve in Candor, Tioga County.

TOM REIMERS



Volunteers came out for HIKEapalooza to help prepare the Hinchcliff Family Preserve at the southern end of Skaneateles Lake for public access.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Participants paddled on the Owasco Inlet as part of HIKEapalooza.



Executive Director Andy Zepp led a hike and discussion on FLLT conservation activities within the Canandaigua Lake watershed at Bare Hill State Unique Area for HIKEapalooza.

## Staff Developments

After 14 years as our Office Manager, sommelier, movie critic and meteorologist, Abbey Chernela retired. Abbey is heading to Corning where he can be found taking long morning walks and lunching at the Old World Café. We miss you already, Abbey!

This summer, we welcome two additions to our staff! Gretchen Salm is our new Land Conservation Support Specialist. Gretchen previously worked as Office Manager for a busy medical practice, holds a BS in Natural Resources from Cornell University, and is a former Land Trust volunteer easement steward.

Stefanie Delaney joins the team as our new Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant. Stefanie comes to us from PSP in Ithaca, where she served as Office Manager. She is also a freelance photographer and hails from Lodi, NY.

Please say hello to Gretchen and Stefanie!



*Abbey Chernela, Office Manager at the Land Trust for 14 years*

## Board Developments

After six great years of service, Stu Schweizer, Marianne Young, and Burch Craig's terms on the board have ended. We are grateful for their tireless efforts on behalf of the Land Trust to conserve our region's lands and waters.

They leave big shoes to fill, but we are confident that our newest board members are up to the task. Please join us as we welcome Doug Brush, Bill Eggers and Lindsay Ruth to the board.

Doug Brush is currently President of BSAF Inc. which owns and operates two farms where he raises beef cattle. He and his family live in Pittsford and spend time enjoying the outdoors.

Bill Eggers is Senior Counsel at Nixon Peabody LLP in Rochester. He splits his time between Webster, NY and Canandaigua Lake where you can find him enjoying nature with his family.

Lindsay Ruth works for Cornell University's Alumni Affairs and Development as the Assistant Vice President, Major Gifts. She and her husband live near the Land Trust's Bishop Nature Preserve in Seneca County and help manage her family's farm land in Lodi.



*Outgoing board members Burch Craig, Marianne Young and Stu Schweizer at the Land Trust's 26th Annual Meeting and Celebration*

*Children running through the trails during Story Walk at the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve*

## Preserve Profile: Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve

*Need a break from the hassles of everyday life? A summer walk through the fern-carpeted forests of the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve could be just the thing.*

We encourage you to bring along your family—the Finger Lakes Land Trust's Story Walk project is ready to entertain young and old alike. Now in its third year, Story Walk encourages childhood literacy and an early love of nature. A children's book is installed in sections along the trail to create an engaging reading and hiking adventure. To enjoy this summer's Story Walk, be sure to follow the blue trail and come any time. The next kickoff hike is scheduled for 10am on Thursday, August 6th, but the story will be in place through early fall.

### NATURAL HISTORY

The preserve is located on the northern hillside of the Ellis Hollow valley, east of Ithaca. The streams running through the preserve drain into Cascadilla Creek, and are important for maintaining the water quality in the creek and nearby wetlands.

The parking area and initial stretch of trail off Ellis Hollow Creek Road gives no hint of what's to come. The beginning of the trail stretches along a power line right-of-way choked with non-native honeysuckle. After about 500 feet, you will enter a peaceful forest full of tall, straight oaks, maples, hickories, basswood, black cherry, white ash, and black birch.

There is an informational kiosk at a junction where the trail splits into a series of nested loops. The blue trail

*continued on page 10*



# Two New Places to Get Outside!

## Hinchcliff Family Preserve

Board member Patty Weisse recently dropped off homemade cookies and ice tea to a group of hard working Land Trust stewardship staff, summer interns, and volunteers. In an effort dubbed "Trailblazer Tuesdays," this hearty group is working tirelessly each week to ready the Hinchcliff Family Preserve in the town of Spafford for its grand opening later this summer.

Before the public opening, staff and volunteers are building a 1½ mile loop trail with a panoramic view of Skaneateles Lake that crosses several gullies and dips into a forest rich with historical artifacts highlighting the agricultural history of this beautiful area. The group is busy clearing, blazing and stabilizing the trail, managing the grassland, and building an informational kiosk.

We invite the community to join us for two guided hikes on Saturday, August 22nd to have a first look at this new preserve. Executive Director Andy Zepp will lead hikers along the new path at 10am, with a second hike beginning at 11am. For directions and details, please visit [fllt.org/events](http://fllt.org/events).



*Volunteers constructed a footbridge in preparation for public access to the Hinchcliff Family Preserve in the town of Spafford, Onondaga County.*

## West River Preserve

The Land Trust is also hard at work creating a scenic overlook with signs interpreting the history and natural history of the West River Valley at our new preserve south of Canandaigua Lake.

The grassland preserve, which will officially open to the public on Labor Day, started as an abandoned

vineyard donated to the Land Trust by Constellation Brands. Land Trust staff, contractors, and volunteers dedicated countless hours to clearing the ramshackle vineyard and replacing the fields with native grasses. This work was accomplished in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and with the generous support of the Raines Family.

The new West River Preserve is dedicated in honor of Don and Skippy Raines, and the Land Trust encourages

birders and wildlife enthusiasts to visit the site this fall. For more information on the opening, please call the office at (607) 275-9487.



*The West River Preserve in Yates County*

## Preserve Profile: Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve

continued from page 8

on your left will take you to Story Walk—situated along the stream and through a forest where shady eastern hemlocks dominate. Choose the path on the right, and you will find yourself walking up and around the somewhat terraced hillside through a mixed hardwood forest.

In the spring and summer, the preserve's quiet glens ring with the songs of Winter Wren, Louisiana Waterthrush, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Black-throated Green Warbler, and numerous other denizens of hemlock-lined ravines. Visit in the spring, and you will delight in the many ferns and wildflowers that carpet the forest floor. Mid-May is a good time to spot one of the magnificent cucumber trees, the only native magnolia in our region. Look for the waxy, yellow-green flower petals that will have fallen to the ground in a ring around the tree.

### HISTORY

The Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve was created in September 2000 when Barbara Keeton and her family, long-time residents of the Ellis Hollow area, donated 111 acres to the Land Trust. Her family enjoyed the land since purchasing the property in the 1970's, and wanted to ensure that it would remain unspoiled and available for wildlife and for quiet public recreation.

A little less than a mile east of the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve lies an addition to the assemblage of protected lands in the town of Dryden—the 39-acre Pearman Woods. Bordering Cornell University's Durland Bird Sanctuary, Pearman Woods was purchased by the Land Trust in October 2009 from Charles Pearman and Carol Skinner, long-time conservation supporters who also donated a conservation easement on an adjacent 11 acres. Acquisition of Pearman Woods expands contiguous protected forest habitat (just listen for the barred owls there!), and provides a potential future trail connection with other protected lands in the area. There is currently no parking area or marked hiking trails in Pearman Woods, but an informal path through the heart of the property is being kept clear by volunteers.

Please visit our web site at [fllt.org/map](http://fllt.org/map) for photos, directions, and to learn more about our preserves. To learn more about Story Walk and other Land Trust events, visit [fllt.org/events](http://fllt.org/events).

Our deepest gratitude for thoughtful gifts in memory of...

### Meyer Howard Abrams

FROM  
James Adams  
James Jenkins and  
Kathy Kelly  
Stuart Krasnoff  
Laraine Rodgers

### Sam Argetsinger

FROM  
Elizabeth Derry

### Doug Bates

FROM  
Kris Scholl and  
Brooke Oropallo

### Merry Jo Bauer

FROM  
Joan Berdick  
Tanya Bitterman  
Betsy and Dick Darlington  
Mary Hornbuckle  
Peter and Scobie  
McClelland  
John and Judith Reppy  
Tompkins County  
Democratic Committee

### Susan Bissell

FROM  
Cynthia Getchonis

### Joan Borncamp

FROM  
Lakeland Rovers

### Charles and Mabel Cladel

FROM  
Nancy and  
Charles Scholes

### Lewis H. Durland IV

FROM  
Andy Boehm and  
Connie O'Brien  
Jane Brooks and Sue Doran  
Sally Cumming  
Amy Durland and  
Robert Mains  
Catherine Emilian  
John Finn  
Dorothy Fisher  
Jeff Furman and Sara Hess  
Ursula Gonsenhaus  
HOLT Architects, P.C.  
Ithaca College,  
Office of Facilities  
Richard King  
Audrey Lawson  
Robert Mooney  
Norm and Marian Pfeiffer  
Sean Selby and  
Shari Stratton Selby  
Phil Shapiro and Mary  
Ascenzi  
Jessica Stevens  
Charles and Kathleen  
Woodcock

### Jim Eyster

FROM  
Patti and Jules Burgevin  
Donald and Janet Lein  
Barbara Page  
Mark Perkoski and  
Catherine Bradley  
Savin-Williams & Cohen  
Fund of the Community  
Foundation  
Philip Snyder and  
Patricia Paine

### Emily-Louise Fairbrother

FROM  
Patrick Fairbrother

### Tom Howard

FROM  
Lakeland Rovers

### Elisabeth Pitman Keiper

FROM  
Thomas Sherman

### Katherine Keiper Sherman Rogers

FROM  
Thomas Sherman

### Taylor Keller

FROM  
Norman and Laura Loomis  
Skippy Raines

### Carl Leopold

FROM  
Amy Jaffe

### Pat Place

FROM  
Skippy Raines

### D. Michael Smith and Donald W. Smith

FROM  
Helen Smith

### John States

FROM  
Skippy Raines

### Show Chi-Wang

FROM  
Johanna Chao

### Wei-Yin Ku Wang

FROM  
Johanna Chao

### Our appreciation for gifts in honor of:

#### Mark Chao

FROM  
Gustave Axelson  
Jennifer Fee  
Maria Guidi  
Holly Heitzman  
Ann Morse  
Larry and Linda Orkin  
John Webster

#### John Hinchcliff

FROM  
David Feldshuh and  
Martha Frommelt

#### Molly McLeod

FROM  
Jeff Katris

ON June 20, 2015, the Land Trust hosted an outdoor event in each of the twelve counties of the Finger Lakes in celebration of successful land protection efforts across the region. Over 175 people enjoyed a bike, hike, or paddle on Land Trust protected lands. A BIG thanks to our HIKEapalooza sponsors:



Pogel, Schubmehl & Ferrara, LLC

# A CLOSER LOOK

## Jack-in-the-Pulpit

*As spring finally arrives in the Finger Lakes, the first Jacks-in-the-Pulpit (Arisaema triphyllum) begin to emerge from the forest floor.*

The foliage of this plant is minimalistic, consisting of only one or two trifoliate leaves that might easily be confused with sprigs of poison ivy. It is the floral structure that is truly rich and strange: a fleshy, cylindrical spike, known as a *spadix*, is surrounded by the graceful curl of a single large bract known as a *spathe*, which is often decorated with natty white, brown, or purple pinstripes. The flowers are invisible, hidden deep in the base of the inflorescence.

As its name suggests, the plant bears a remarkable and improbable resemblance to a tiny man standing in a tiny old-fashioned canopied pulpit, looking something like a cross between a skunk cabbage (to which it is closely related) and a pitcher plant (to which it isn't). Nevertheless, its lifecycle recalls Greek mythology more than it does Church history: it's a dead ringer for Tiresias, the blind, long-lived prophet of Thebes, who spent time as both a woman and a man.

The Jack-in-the-Pulpit grows very, very slowly in the damp gloom of the forest floor. For the first few years of its life, it produces a single leaf that captures whatever dim light manages to filter through the leaves of the trees, squirreling away every extra bit of energy in its underground corm. The plant would be vulnerable to herbivores if every part of it were not saturated with large crystals of highly poisonous calcium oxalate. Most animals wisely leave it alone, though black bears dig up and eat the corms with relish, apparently taking advantage of their laxative effects.

After two or three good years, a plant may put out an inflorescence containing only male flowers: the plant's existence is still marginal, and it takes much less energy to make pollen than to make fruit. If conditions remain favorable for several more years and the corm has grown large enough, it may cautiously begin to produce both

male and female flowers in its "pulpit"; eventually, if all goes well, it may be so bold as to put out two leaves and mostly, or only, female flowers. Whenever conditions deteriorate, it will revert back to producing male flowers and only a single leaf. It switches sex in this way, year after year, for several decades and reportedly up to a hundred years.

Although some of its physiological adaptations are remarkably sophisticated, its pollination strategy is fairly crude. It cannot self-fertilize because the male flowers die before the female flowers are mature, so it needs the help of insect pollinators. The spathe emits a mushroom-like

hatches at the bottoms of their spathes, but those with female flowers are dead ends. Gnats foolish enough to fall into a female plant after falling into a male one may accidentally pollinate a few flowers before they die inside. In late summer, the spathe withers to reveal a cluster of bright red fruits that are just as poisonous as the rest of the plant.

By turns both beautiful and deadly, male and female, the Jack-in-the-Pulpit is a jack-of-all-trades. It has been used as both a food and a poison, a medicine and a contraceptive. Native Americans used the berries to make a red dye, and European settlers used starch from



*Jack-in-the-Pulpit captured by Lang Elliott of [miracleofnature.org](http://miracleofnature.org)*

LANG ELLIOTT

scent in order to attract tiny gnats that lay their eggs on fungus. Once the insects crawl inside, they become disoriented: the hood of the spathe blocks light shining from above, the bottom of the pulpit is often pale and translucent, and the dark and light stripes make it impossible for them to tell which way is up. Floral structures with male flowers have small escape

the corm to stiffen their clothes. Like Tiresias himself, the plant is believed to have the power of prophesy: a seed swirled in a cup of water will reveal whether a sick person will live or die. Perhaps Jack-in-the-Pulpit is the Tiresias of our damp forest floor.

—Jacqueline Stuhmiller

# Finger Lakes Land Trust

## Officers:

Holland C. Gregg, III, *President*  
Edward Premo, *Vice President*  
Patty Weisse, *Secretary*  
Jan Suwinski, *Treasurer*  
Bill Eggers, *At-Large*

## Board Members:

Dave Birchenough	Carrie J. Pollak
Robert Brancato	Lindsay Ruth
Percy Browning	Myra J. Shulman
Doug Brush	Donald Specker
Phil Greenberg	Mary Jo Yunis
Martha Macinski	

## Advisory Council:

James Byrnes	Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr.
John Fitzpatrick	Richard Raines
James Fralick	Mark Stash
Barbara Hamlin	Doug Sutherland
Albert Joerger	Liz Thorndike
Lynn Leopold	James Walsh
Robert Mrazek	David Zorn

## Staff:

Andrew Zepp, *Executive Director*  
Stefanie Delaney, *Bookkeeper/*  
*Administrative Assistant*  
Karen Edelstein, *GIS Projects Manager*  
Nomi Fridman, *Finance Manager*  
Jason Gorman, *Land Steward*  
Edie Jodz, *Assistant Director of*  
*Development*  
Mary Johnson, *Development Associate*  
Kelly Makosch, *Director of*  
*Development and Communications*  
Elizabeth Newbold, *Land Protection*  
*Specialist*  
Zachary Odell, *Director of Land*  
*Protection*  
Chris Olney, *Director of Stewardship*  
Gretchen Salm, *Land Conservation*  
*Support Specialist*  
Kris West, *Senior Field Representative*

**Newsletter Editors:** Eben McLane,  
Krishna Ramanujan

**Newsletter Layout:** Leigh Dezelan

## Advisors:

*Legal Counsel:* Randy Marcus;  
Miller Mayer, LLP; Peter Miller;  
Richard Ruswick; True, Walsh, &  
Schubert, LLP

*Forestry Consultant:* Michael DeMunn  
*Stewardship Advisor:* Betsy Darlington

# Finger Lakes Land Trust

202 E. Court Street  
Ithaca, New York 14850  
Ph: 607-275-9487  
Fax: 607-275-0037  
email: [info@fllt.org](mailto:info@fllt.org) • [www.fllt.org](http://www.fllt.org)



# Finger Lakes Land Trust

202 E. Court Street  
Ithaca, NY 14850

*Return Service Requested*

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TRUMANSBURG, NY  
PERMIT NO. 1

## Summer 2015 Calendar

**Saturday, August 15, 8:30 pm: Moth Night—Lighting for Lepidoptera! Roy H. Park Preserve—north entrance, town of Dryden.** Bring a lawn chair, a head lamp, warm clothes, and a camera. Several lights will be set up for moth and other insect observation and we will discuss the identification and natural history of the species that come in. Leading this event will be Jason Dombroskie, Manager of the Cornell University Insect Collection and Coordinator of the Insect Diagnostic Lab. He has 23 years of experience mothing and has many years of experience leading interpretive talks and walks on natural history. **FROM ITHACA:** Take Rt. 13 North towards Dryden. Go approx. 12 miles and turn right on Irish Settlement Rd. Continue on Irish Settlement approx. 4 miles to find the NORTH parking area—where the boardwalk is—on the left (approx. 0.5 mile after Hammond Hill Rd).

**Saturday, August 22, 10:00 am: Creek Walk for Kids and Families! Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve, town of Dryden.** Join Sarah Fiorello, Interpretation Coordinator for Cornell Plantations, for an exploration of what lives under the rocks and in the streambed of the Ellis Hollow Preserve. We'll learn a little about stream health and see what else we can find on the preserve. Be sure to wear shoes you don't mind getting wet. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Don't forget water and snacks! **FROM ITHACA:** Follow Ellis Hollow Road 2.5 miles past East Hill Shopping Plaza. Turn left on Genung Road, then right on Ellis Hollow Creek Road. Preserve entrance is located 0.2 miles past intersection, on left side of road.

*See our web site for maps and photos of the preserves.*

Walks go rain, sun or snow. Please bring snacks and water and wear sturdy shoes. Call the Land Trust at (607) 275-9487 for details or visit [www.fllt.org/events](http://www.fllt.org/events).

