



# THE LAND STEWARD

Newsletter of the Finger Lakes Land Trust

Vol. 13, No. 2

working to protect the natural integrity of the Finger Lakes Region

Spring 2001

## Canandaigua Vista Protected with Gift of Land

### *Forest View I & II. Panorama*

*Properties.* Billboards along the smaller western Finger Lakes hawk these housing developments, but since most of the shoreline property is already occupied, these developers' dreams would crawl up the parallel hillsides and destroy the very views they promise. Future homeowners could pay handsomely to look at each other's houses from across each "little lake"— Canandaigua, Honeoye, Canadice, Hemlock and Conesus.

Now, through the generosity of Thomas and Sandra Hansen the Land Trust has protected permanently a massive 220-acre forest covering a steep hillside over a mile long on South Hill at the foot of Canandaigua Lake, much to the delight of those who can see that prominent hillside from miles away.

*continued on page 4*



Photo by: Jim Fralick

*Looking southeast across Canandaigua Lake to South Hill, a large portion of which is now protected as the Land Trust's 20th nature preserve.*

## Wesley Hill Nature Preserve Nearly Quadruples in Size!



Photo by: Tony Ingraham

"Any time, any excuse for a hike," Jim Kersting told me when I thanked him as we returned from our trudge through the snow. He'd just spent a Saturday morning in mid-January leading me through the woods to where the big white pines are on the south side of the Anna Brown tract of the Wesley Hill Nature Preserve. The Finger Lakes Land Trust recently purchased this 230-acre property for a bargain-sale price from the Humane Society of Rochester, with generous help from an anonymous Land Trust donor. At the same time, Land Trust member Dr. Christopher White

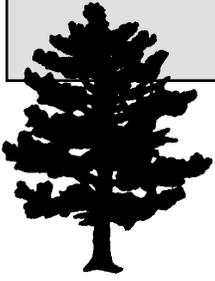
*A closer look at one of the magnificent white pine trees that is now protected permanently as part of the Wesley Hill Nature Preserve.*

donated 19 acres of forestland that adjoin the preserve. In mid-March, another adjacent landowner, Tom Alpaugh, sold 19 of his acres at a bargain price, for addition to the preserve. Thanks to the generosity of Chris, Tom, the Humane Society and our anonymous donor, and the hard work of the Western Lakes Chapter, the Wesley Hill Nature Preserve southeast of Honeoye Lake now tops out at 359 acres.

We had walked, supported by ski poles, through the gently sloping woodlands that make up most of the Anna Brown property. Botanist Pat Martin from Rochester calls this "a mature, undisturbed, well-buffered xeric version of hemlock-northern hardwood forest in excellent condition"— it features big

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LAND TRUST 12TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION: APRIL 29, 2001



## AT THE SIGN OF THE LONE PINE

Around mid-January, I had one of those sudden epiphanies while driving up the lake road. The knowledge came to me that we are truly co-creators with spirit on this planet of ours. The insight had the kind of intensity that fundamental truths often show.

It went beyond the wordless whispers that well up from the depths of consciousness, saying *what you do makes a difference* and *yes, you can be of help*. This one declared that the role of co-creator means we are on center stage, not off in the wings as minor characters of limited importance and responsibility.

In the following days, I stumbled across this theme in the writing of other women. In her latest book, Jalaja Bonheim writes about the risk of taking Buddhist principles of detachment and acceptance incorrectly into practice, with a misguided passive subservience to whatever forces come into your life. Life's challenge is to stand on the razor's edge in the now of each moment, accepting the present configuration while claiming the magic of your own agency for transforming the next moment.

I found those words encouraging given our recent impetuous rush toward blind exploitation of wilderness areas on perhaps false assumptions about energy supply and economics. It is certainly easy for those of us concerned about sustainability to feel overwhelmed by the archaic forces of greed, fear, and short-term thinking. We find new power in the idea that we each wield the sculpting knife of a creator.

*Life's challenge is to stand on the razor's edge in the now of each moment, accepting the present configuration while claiming the magic of your own agency for transforming the next moment.*

Futurist Barbara Marx Hubbard offers even more support for the notion that we don't have to simply endure massive wrongdoing while chipping away at the edges of the cultural juggernaut with our good deeds. Her analysis of the social and technological changes of the past fifty years tells her that we now have "the actual power to co-create or to co-destroy our world, and we are entering the first age of conscious evolution, from passive to active participation in evolution itself." She urges us to "be the change we wish to see in the world." Heady words.

This process of co-creation hits all the dimensions of our lives – our private relationships and social structures are co-created experiences. Yes, it can be challenging, even grueling, to work our way through the friction of trying consciously to evolve something new. But Hubbard knows that when we join our creative abilities with others, we may experience what she calls a fusion of genius – the thrill of resonating with others possessing the audacity to reach into the future through the exercise of their power in

the now. This has me wondering what the conservation community of the Finger Lakes Region might be capable of creating if we were to recognize fully our own genius and develop a vision sufficiently powerful to catalyze our collaboration.

What would happen if we decided to set our minds to a sustainable future for the Finger Lakes Region?

— Gay Nicholson, Executive Director

## Land Trust Forms Advisory Council

We're established, we're thriving, and we're growing. But the more we take on and the more successful we are, the greater our need for guidance.

This past winter on December 4, 2000, our newly formed Advisory Council held its first meeting. Comprised of people holding leadership positions in business, education, and politics, the council will advise us on our strategic plan and opportunities for collaboration, provide feedback and perspective on how we are perceived in the region, and generally help fulfill the Land Trust's mission. Council members' wide-ranging backgrounds and willingness to ask tough questions will help our Board formulate policies and programs as we take on yet more land protection projects. Members of the Council include:

- William Allyn, president and CEO of Welch Allyn
- Ramsey Brous, co-owner of Ithaca Bakery and Collegetown Bagels
- James Byrnes, chairman and CEO of Tompkins County Trust Company
- Dr. Thomas Eisner, J. G. Shurman professor of Chemical Ecology at Cornell University and director of the Cornell Institute for Research in Chemical Ecology
- Dr. John Fitzpatrick, director of the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell
- Howard Hartnett, vice-president and regional manager of M&T Bank
- Robert Mrazek, author and former member of the US House of Representatives
- Francis Sheehan, director of the Office of Natural Resource Planning

for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

- Dr. Peggy Williams, president of Ithaca College

Founding Land Trust president A. Carl Leopold serves as the liaison between the Advisory Council and our Board of Directors.

Council Chair Bob Mrazek says, "I believe the Advisory Council can serve the Land Trust in many ways including the lending of our endorsement and support to important land protection initiatives. The Land Trust has been an incredibly successful organization and I look forward to helping."

The FLLT is grateful to Advisory Council members for their willingness to serve.

— John Semmler

## The Birth of the Land Trust Movement

It's ten years before the end of a century of astonishing urbanization and expansion. Citizens worry that development is overshadowing the natural characteristics that define their towns and home landscapes. A Boston-based landscape architect named Charles Elliot strikes upon an innovative solution to the loss of open space. In a letter to the editor of an environmental journal, he proposes that citizens create a private association for the explicit purpose of protecting and preserving regional scenic treasures through permanent trusteeship.

One year later, Elliot spearheads an effort to establish a privately funded tax-exempt association dedicated to protecting Massachusetts's natural and historical sites. He convinces the Massachusetts government to pass legislation that results in the incorporation of The Trustees of Public Reservations— what many now call the nation's first land trust. The year is 1891.

At the time, a few other groups were acquiring land with historical, archaeological, recreational and natural values. Since the mid-1800s, "village improvement societies" had been springing up in towns across New England, in part to protect parcels of land within their communities for public use and enjoyment. As the century drew to a close, organizations such as the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History, the Maine Audubon Society, and the Ohio Historical Society bought and protected lands that complemented their missions.

The Trustees of Public Reservations (later, the name was shortened to The Trustees of Reservations) was the first

privately funded, tax-exempt organization formed by citizens to purchase properties for the express purpose of protecting environmental and scenic values. This began a spate of land trust formations. In 1900, a group in California organized the Sempervirens Club, dedicated to protecting redwood trees and their habitat (see photo). Back in New England, nine concerned citizens formed the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests in 1901. These three organizations were pioneers in locally based land protection that relied on members rather than government funding. And it's a good sign for land trust longevity that all three of these early organizations are still actively pre-

serving more land and stewarding the properties they have acquired over the past century.

It may be coincidence that Boston, the birthplace of the American Revolution, is also the home of land trust evolution, but it is no surprise that the land trust movement began in the Northeast. In the late 1800s, the eastern seaboard was already beginning to grapple with congestion and unbridled growth, and in 1890, the U.S. Census Bureau declared that the American frontier had closed. Urban density replaced manifest destiny— first in the

Northeast, but later throughout the country.

Even so, it wasn't until the post-World War II economic and development boom was well underway that the number of land trusts and their geographic spread began to increase dramatically. Indeed, the vigorous growth of land trusts mirrors the rapid urbanization and suburbanization that began to dominate communities across the country in the

Photo courtesy of the Sempervirens Fund  
([www.sempervirens.org](http://www.sempervirens.org))



*The Sempervirens Fund, one of the first land trusts in the U.S., has been working to protect redwood forestlands in the Santa Cruz Mountains since 1900.*

second half of the 20th century. While there were only 53 land trusts in 26 states in 1950, more than 1,250 land trusts operate across the country today. During the 20th century, an era when environmental awareness came to the forefront, no single environmental movement grew more rapidly than the land trust community.

The 1990s especially were a period of exponential growth and achievement for land trusts. By the end of 1999, there were close to 1,240 land trusts. As of 1998, when the Land Trust Alliance conducted its most recent National Land Trust Census, local and regional land trusts had protected 4.7 million acres, 135 percent more than they had protected just a decade earlier. Today, land trusts are present in all 50 states, as well as in many other countries.

While it's unlikely that the sheer number of land trusts will continue to grow at this rate, land trusts will continue to help citizens shape their communities in ways that respect and care for land. Here's to the next 110 years of land trust history— just a sliver of perpetuity, but certainly a cause for celebration!

— Kat Lieberknecht

# BUSINESS PARTNER PROFILE

## Money with a Mission

*Put your money where your values are.* These words not only embody the spirit of the Land Trust—they're also the motto of Money with a Mission, a financial-planning service and new business member of the Land Trust.

Greg Garvan started Money with a Mission in Newton, Massachusetts, in 1992. He moved the business, and his family, to Ithaca just this past year. "Newton was all suburb," Greg explained. "Ithaca is the kind of place we were looking for." They were also drawn by family connections; Greg's wife, Priscilla, grew up in Ithaca and much of her family is here now.

Money with a Mission uses several screens, both social and environmental, to help clients find the right investments. "We also help people plan their philanthropic support and volunteer activities," says Greg. "I sit down with people and ask them, 'What do you want to do with your life?' and help them figure out how to get there." Greg advises on insurance, retirement, and estate and tax planning as well as investments.

Becoming Land Trust members was an easy decision for Greg and his family. "Land issues are important to us. I have been a Nature Conservancy volunteer and I was involved with the Trustees of Reservations in Massachusetts. When we sat down to plan our charitable giving, the Finger Lakes Land Trust



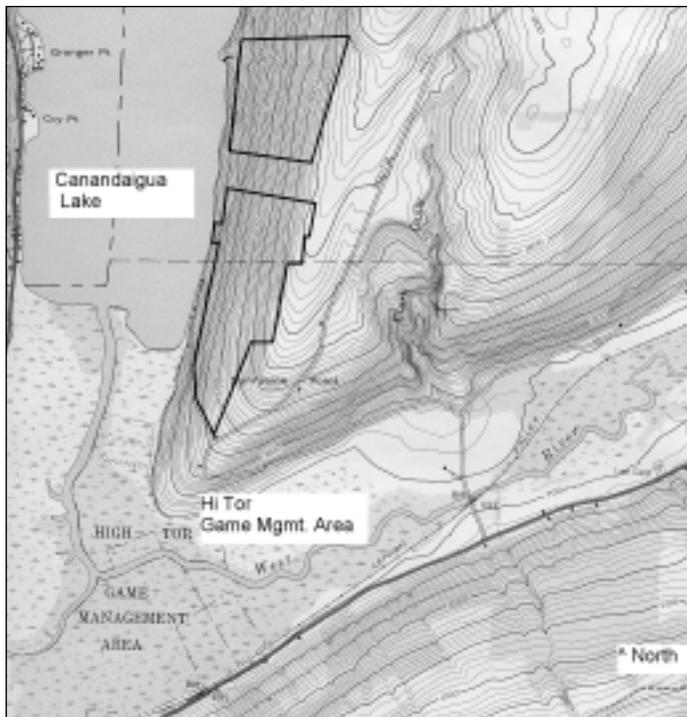
Photo provided by: Greg Garvan

*Greg Garvan, Brady Quirk-Garvan, Allen Quirk and Evan Quirk-Garvan (from top left).*

was an obvious choice."

Money with a Mission is a member of First Affirmative Financial Network, a network of over 50 financial planners, and will donate \$100 to the Land Trust for every new client that mentions this benefit. Call Greg at 877-644-8042 (toll free) or visit <[www.moneywithamission.com](http://www.moneywithamission.com)> to find out more.

— Gail Blake



*The Land Trust's newest nature preserve, consisting of two parcels totaling 220 acres, is outlined in black on this topography map.*

## Canandaigua Vista Protected

*continued from page 1*

Jim Fralick and Meg Ewing, Western Lakes Chapter members who helped negotiate this gift, tell us that the views from the property are long and spectacular, too. Through our stewardship, a grateful public can enjoy long walks *and* views here—forever.

South Hill (which separates the south end of Canandaigua Lake from the adjoining West River valley) has long been a magnet for human longings and was revered by the Senecas as a special place. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has preserved much of the east side of that hill, including wild and popular Clark's Gully, as a part of their spectacularly varied Hi Tor Wildlife Management Area. And now the Hansens of nearby Middlesex have enabled us to protect a major portion of the west side of the same hill in a swath of untrammeled land connected at the top to Hi Tor.

Local environmentalists and town leaders applaud the acquisition, citing the essential role the land plays in the protection of the watershed. George Barden, Canandaigua Lake watershed inspector, and Kevin Olvany, the Canandaigua Lake watershed project manager, view the hillside as a very sensitive portion of the watershed because of its steep slopes, erodible soils and proximity to the lake.

Watch for future announcements of the property's dedication and planned walks to enjoy this fabulous addition to the Land Trust's preserves.

—Irene Szabo

# THE ETHICS OF CONSERVATION

## From The Geography of Nowhere

(1993, reprinted with permission)

American land law was first predicated on the paramount principle that land was first and foremost a commodity for capital gain. Speculation became the primary basis for land distribution—indeed, the commercial transfer of property would become the basis of American land-use planning, which is to say hardly any planning at all. Somebody would buy a large tract of land and subdivide it into smaller parcels at a profit—a process that continues in our time.

*“Individualism at first, only saps the virtues of public life; but in the long run it attacks and destroys all others and is at length absorbed in selfishness.”*

—Tocqueville

Other Old World values were topped before this novel system—for example, the idea of land as the physical container for community values. Nearly eradicated in the rush to profit was the concept of stewardship, of land as a public trust: that we who are alive now are responsible for taking proper care of the landscape so that future generations can dwell in it in safety and happiness.

As historian Sam Bass Warner put it, the genius of American land law and the fanatical support it engendered “lay in its identification of land as a civil liberty instead of as a social resource.”

This is embodied today in the popular phrase, “You can’t tell me what to do with my land.” The “you” here might be a neighbor, the community, or the government. The government’s power to regulate land use was limited under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the

Constitution. The Fifth states that private property cannot be taken for public use without the due process of law and just compensation. All subsequent land-use law in America has hinged on whether it might deprive somebody of the economic value of their land.

America’s were the most liberal property laws on earth when they were established. The chief benefits were rapid

development of the wilderness, equal opportunity for those with cash and/or ambition, simplicity of acquisition, and the right to exploitation—such as chopping down all the virgin white pine forests of Michigan (they called it “mining trees”). Our laws gave the individual clear title to make his own decision, but they also deprived him of the support of community and custom and of the presence of sacred places.

The identification of this extreme individualism of property ownership with all that is sacred in American life tends to degrade the idea of the public realm, and hence of the landscape tissue that ties together the thousands of pieces of private property that make up a town, a suburb, a state. It also degrades the notion that the private individual has a responsibility to his public realm—or, to put it another way, that the public realm is the physical manifestation of the common good.

Tocqueville observed this when he toured America in 1831. “Individualism,” he wrote, “at first, only saps the virtues of public life; but in the long run it attacks and destroys all others and is at length absorbed in selfishness.”

—James Howard Kunstler

## NEW AND RENEWING BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST

Alternatives Federal Credit Union  
Banfield and Associates  
Borg-Warner Automotive  
Computing Center  
Dominion Transmission, Inc.  
Fontana’s Shoe Store

Elmira Savings & Loan  
Gourmet’s Delight  
Greenstar Cooperative Market  
Healing Hands of Ithaca  
HSBC Bank, USA  
Ithaca Foreign Car Service  
Dr. Ladenheim, D.D.S.

Money with a Mission  
Muddy Paws Pottery  
Rose City Glass of Canandaigua  
Savings Bank of the Finger Lakes  
Southern Tier Custom Fabricators  
A.H. Wilcox & Son

# FACES OF THE LAND TRUST

*The Land Trust is fortunate to have an infusion of youthful energy this spring. Alexis Suskin-Sperry, Nikki White (both from the Alternative Community School) and Sarah Broadway (Lansing Middle School) volunteer in the office once a week. Michael McGreevy, Megan Young, Laura Siegel, all undergraduates at Ithaca College, and Katie Knight, a graduate student at Cornell University, are doing internships with us this semester. Emily Eisman, Charlotte Nunes and PJ Rusello, all Cornell undergraduates, and Steve Ceracche from Ithaca High School, continue to provide us with essential help in the office and field.*

All photos by: Susan Hurwitz



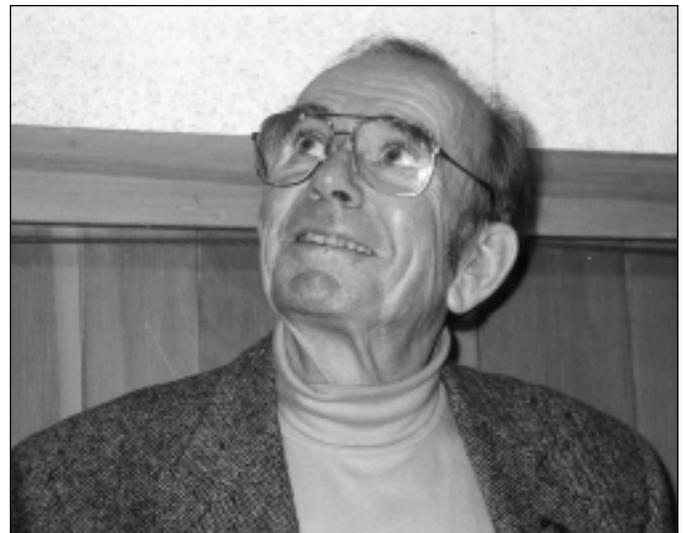
*Carl Leopold attending a reception at the Land Trust's newly purchased headquarters office, the Leopold Center.*



*Sarah Broadway answers the phone like a pro during her shift at the office.*



*Alexis Suskin-Sperry and Nikki White (left to right) celebrate Mardi Gras at the office.*



*Dr. Thomas Eisner answers a question about his newest book, Chromatic Fantasy, at a Voices of the Earth slideshow and reading co-sponsored by the Land Trust and the Bookery in Ithaca.*

## Wesley Hill Nearly Quadruples in Size

*continued from page 1*

oaks, sugar maples, hickories, cherries, and other species, with some trees a foot-and-a-half to two feet thick. We took a short detour off an old, snow-covered logging road to look at a dark little hemlock-lined ravine, one of several that crease the tract on their way to Briggs Gully.

Jim kept noting boundary markers and survey tape from the recent closing on the property. He described how ongoing discussions between the Western Lakes Chapter and adjacent landowners have helped add to the growing network of preserved land in this Briggs Gully, Honeoye Valley area. He told me how the Land Trust offers another option to landowners who face financial pressures to log their land or subdivide it into 10- to 20- acre lots for new homes.

Soon we reached the brim of Briggs Gully, one of the biggest ravines in the region. This section, while steep, isn't rugged; its sides are mostly soil. I was glad I'd come in winter, for we could see the other side with the big hemlocks on the opposing ridge. Maybe one day this area, too, will be protected permanently.

With the addition of this new acreage to the Land Trust's Wesley Hill Nature Preserve, we are solidly on the way towards one of the Western Lakes Chapter's most important goals: protecting an outstanding scenic, recreational, and biological corridor across the south end of the Honeoye Lake valley. Beginning at Cumming Nature Center at the headwaters of Briggs Gully, a necklace of protected land includes our Wesley Hill Preserve, wetlands protected by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and The Nature



Photo by: Jim Fratlick

*Aerial view of Briggs Gully (center, foreground), Honeoye Inlet Valley wetlands, south end of Honeoye Lake, and Harriet Hollister Spencer State Park (upper left).*

Conservancy south of the lake, and Harriet Hollister Spencer State Park on the steep western wall of the valley. It will take a long time, Jim thinks, to put the remaining beads in place, but it's worth the wait.

We descended most of the way to the bottom of the gully and turned east. We were among tall white pines that lift their needles on weathered limbs high above the surrounding forest. After some wandering about, Jim located "the mother of all pines," 41 inches in diameter at breast height. Though past loggers had not gotten this giant—which may be as old as our nation—the Land Trust has rescued it from death row, for this and many other large pines and oaks had green timber cruiser marks on them. "They all are going to fall down dead

someday anyway," the prospective logger had told Jim.

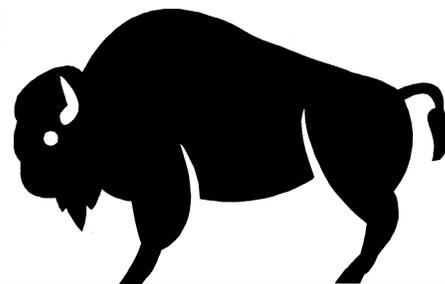
While they wait for that, this old pine and its relations stand as lonely remnants of grander forests. In those days, pines like these supported eagles' nests. "The lack of big white pines is one reason why eagles nearly disappeared from the Finger Lakes," says Mike DeMunn, Land Trust forester.

Jim had planned to take me along the hillside to some large hemlocks on the side of a ravine, but the terrain and the time would not permit it. Instead, we trudged north through the snowy hardwoods again, over a hidden forest floor that will reveal its rich wildflowers to you, should you decide to visit this special place come spring.

— Tony Ingraham

## Turn organic produce into protected land!

A southern Cayuga Lake Watershed-area organic farm is considering offering produce shares for Land Trust members during the 2001 season. The farm will donate 15% of its revenue from this Community Sponsored Agriculture (CSA) project to the Finger Lakes Land Trust. Land Trust members interested in buying a share and receiving fresh, organic produce from the CSA farm can leave a message for Bison Ridge farm at 607-589-4102.



## Bombs-to-Bluebirds

We still have a good supply of those wonderful sturdy nest boxes, made by volunteers from surplus ammo boxes from the Seneca Army Depot. The holes are sized for bluebirds, as well as smaller birds. We request a \$5 donation for each box—but will happily take more! Make great gifts—for humans or birds!

## Earth Day Celebration of the 'Glen'

On Earth Day, Sunday, April 22 at 2 PM, the final "Always On Sunday" program in 2001, sponsored by the Tioga County Council on the Arts, will feature a new work, "Seasons in the Glen" by Chuck Knauf. The program will be held at the Tioga County Historical Society, 110 Front Street, Owego New York.

"Seasons in the Glen" is written for a vocal quartet and piano and is intended for a family audience. In addition to the new work, quartet members and Mr. Knauf will perform several other vocal numbers.

Chuck Knauf and sisters Helen Taylor, Shirley Knauf and Eunice Combs granted a conservation easement on their 41-acre homestead in Owego to the Finger Lakes Land Trust in 1991. Part of the protected property includes a small slice of Pumpelly's Glen, a favorite childhood playground for the Knauf siblings. The initial inspiration for "Seasons in the Glen" sprang from those years of carefree times in the Glen.

## CHAPTER REPORTS

### Skaneateles? Eastern Lakes Chapter!

Spring—it's a time of renewal and change. As the Skaneateles Lake area grows in popularity and population, our chapter looks to its own growth and is planning accordingly. West and east of us, Owasco and Otisco lakes, likewise pressured by development and sprawl, face loss of open space and increased needs for local services. These three watersheds aren't just public water supplies—in each, natives, seasonal residents, and transplants alike care about the landscape and quality of life we all respect and enjoy. So our chapter is changing and renewing—and renaming—itsself.

In line with the Land Trust's goal of establishing itself as the leader in protecting the natural integrity of the Finger Lakes region, we are expanding to include the Owasco and Otisco Lake watersheds. From Auburn to Moravia, Skaneateles to Cortland, Marcellus to Tully and all towns between, the good people of the land where we work, play, and live will now be a unified voice and vehicle for land protection and stewardship.

*Happy Birthday, Eastern Lakes Chapter!*

—Kris Scholl

### Keuka Chapter

The Keuka Chapter congratulates the Western Lakes Chapter (especially Jim Fralick and Meg Ewing) and Tom and Sue Hansen for the donation of the Hansen's land to the Finger Lakes Land Trust. We're delighted because this impressive land adjoins Hi Tor Wildlife Management Area and will extend its beauty and benefits to residents and visitors.

The Keuka Chapter and the Land Trust headquarters office are working with Yates County on a scenic vista project funded by the Rural New York Planning and Preservation Grant Program. Many thanks to Land Trust member and volunteer Phil Whitman for writing this grant. Thanks, also, to Phil, Yates County Planner (and Land Trust member!) John Czmaske and Gay Nicholson for their work in developing a workable plan for this grant.

While we have land protection projects waiting in the wings, the Keuka Chapter remains stymied by oil and gas leases. When landholders sign oil and gas leases without an appropriate addendum to the lease, conservation easements are impossible without a subordination by the oil and gas company. We urge landowners to know all the consequences and negotiating points before signing leases. We are in the process of updating oil and gas lease information available at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Yates County. Thanks to volunteers Butch and Jan Comstock for their work on oil and gas leases and for their promotion of good land stewardship.

The Keuka Chapter welcomes new members and volunteers. Call Debbie Koop: (315) 595-2523 or email: brkside@eznet.net

—Debbie Koop, Acting Chapter Chair

### Western Lakes Chapter

Check out the two front page articles ("Canandaigua Vista Protected with Gift of Land" and "Wesley Hill Nature Preserve Nearly Quadruples in Size!") to find out what the Western Lakes Chapter has been doing! And, if you're in the Western Lakes Chapter service area, check your newsletter inserts for the first edition of the Western Lakes Chapter Newsletter.

# VOLUNTEER PROFILE

## Alanna Fontanella

If you've visited our new, enlarged Land Trust office—now named the Leopold Center—you can appreciate why Alanna Fontanella is the subject of this profile. As a member of our building committee, Alanna (along with her husband David and other hard-working volunteers) sanded, scrubbed, stripped, painted, stained, and hammered back together the many lovely components of this grand old house. For Alanna it was a labor of love because she has always been interested in the conservation, preservation, and restoration of beautiful places, man-made or natural. When she is not volunteering indoors for the Land Trust, she is out in one of our preserves, doing trail maintenance work at Lick Brook, cleaning up at Stevenson, building wooden stairs at Whitlock. It's all a natural outgrowth of her life's interests and experiences.

Alanna is one of seven children. She grew up in a densely populated neighborhood of Kenmore, NY, just north of Buffalo. She always loved the playing fields just across the street, a welcome piece of green open space. Alanna came to Ithaca College to study physical therapy and upon graduation went to work in a large teaching hospital in New York City. She loved the city—the culture, the diversity of the people, the old buildings, the sense of neighborhood and being able to walk to many places or to use public



Photo by: Susan Hunwitz

*Alanna Fontanella.*

transportation—and remained there for the next twelve years. In fact, she didn't even get a driver's license until she was 26 when she and a friend drove across America from the East to the West Coast. Travelling in a VW Bug, they camped, hiked and backpacked through national parks along the way.

Back in New York, Alanna established a pattern of quitting her job every three years to travel for three months, usually in Europe. Her first trip there was

via freighter. She also travelled in China, Hong Kong, and the Phillipines, and later—with husband David—to New Zealand, Australia, and Tahiti.

Alanna also finds time to be a quilter and is a member of the Tompkins County Quilters Guild and the Area Coordinator for ABC - the At-risk Baby Crib Quilt Project. She holds a part-time job as an advertising representative for Cornell Magazine, and in the fall she works in the Admissions Office at Ithaca College.

So how did Alanna end up in Trumansburg? David's grandparents had owned a dairy farm in T'burg and he spent summers there; he, too had gone to Ithaca College. Later he accepted a job at Cornell University. Trumansburg has characteristics the Fontanellas cherish – a small community, lots of greenery, old houses, and almost everything is in easy walking distance. Set that in the middle of the Finger Lakes where both enjoy hiking and kayaking, and it's a great place to be.

Alanna has always loved the outdoors, but ever since she saw a sign on a hiking trail suggesting that hikers leave the trail better than they found it, she has become committed to actively working for land preservation. The Land Trust is lucky to have people such as Alanna as active volunteers.

— *Merry Jo Bauer*

### DON'T FORGET!

The Finger Lakes Land Trust's 12th ANNUAL CELEBRATION is on SUNDAY, APRIL 29TH at the Foundation of Light near Ithaca.

Join us for lunch and a talk with guest speaker Robert Young (director of the NJ office of Sustainable Business, Chemung County organic farmer and a lecturer at the Cornell University Department of City and Regional Planning). Then help us recognize and celebrate our Conservationist of the

Year, our Volunteer of the Year and all of our dedicated volunteers. Plus, we'll give you an overview of the past year's properties and projects. We'll close the afternoon with a hike at the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve. See insert for more information and reservation form.

***Gifts to Honor  
and Celebrate***

Our sincere thanks for the  
generous donation in honor of  
**JOHN SEMMLER,**  
from Dorothy Reddington

...

We are sincerely grateful  
for the gift in appreciation of  
**JANET BISHOP YOUNG,**  
from Rob Young

**IN MEMORIUM**

*Our sincere thanks for  
the generous donation*

IN MEMORY OF  
**William B. Van Orman,**  
from Elizabeth Johns

*We are sincerely grateful  
for the gift*

IN MEMORY OF  
**Ora and Laura Lee Smith,**  
from James S. Smith

**Land Trust as Landlord**

Interested in renting an  
apartment in our  
headquarters building,  
the historic Leopold Center?

...

Contact CSP Management at  
(607) 277-6961 to find out more.

**Wish List**

Hand drill and bits  
and  
Audubon Guide to  
Mushrooms

**POETRY OF THE SEASON**

*The following four poems were written by Becca Harber*

every raindrop  
a river and ocean  
in disguise



*brown wings edged with gold  
flutter zigzags through the woods  
first spring butterfly*

*spring sounds night and day  
peeper chorus and cackling frogs  
junco's sweet trilling*

*wading through flooded grasses  
where knobby heads of cackling frogs  
show and disappear*

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# A CLOSER LOOK

Photos by: Lang Elliott

## MIGRATION

In temperate regions, soundscapes change dramatically with the seasonal migrations of birds. We first hear the spring choruses as small children, and might even acquire some precocious geography on the occasion. After that, residual curiosity about the wanderings of birds typically languishes. But if the loose ends are picked up later in life, we can experience a fresh flush of forgotten wonder.

Finger Lakes' birds offer tremendous scope for a more deliberative revisitation of the subject. From commonplaces like the American Crow and less familiar summer habitués like the tiny Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, or obscure residents like the Northern Saw-whet Owl and spectacular visitants like the American White Pelican, the birds we may hope to see in this region comprise a wealth of some three hundred species from fifty families. Ninety percent are migratory. Over a hundred stay to breed. Their wildly varying origins and destinations involve our landscapes in a global web of interconnected ecosystems.

The flow of birds across our region is ceaseless. Between the great surges of songbirds in spring and fall, birds with other schedules are always on the wing. Some groups are highly visible, like the forty species of waterfowl that use our lakes and wetlands. Others scarcely attract notice. Significant movements occur even in the deep of winter, when we see species like the Iceland Gull, Snowy Owl, and Northern Shrike.

Among the least obtrusive migrants to cross our latitudes are nearly thirty species of shorebirds. Habitat for them is so scarce in the Finger Lakes that it's



*Great Crested Flycatcher.*



*Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*

easy to miss them entirely, but where it exists, they dependably congregate.

The beautiful American Golden Plover winters on the Argentine Pampas and nests well beyond the Coronation Gulf in the Arctic archipelago. The south-

bound leg of its 16,000-mile round-trip swings out over the western Atlantic, but many juveniles follow land routes. Singly or in small groups they may stop here in late summer, often in company with many other shorebirds.

Because arduous peregrinations push the limits of physical resources, migrants generally wait for favorable winds. Strong weather fronts boost fresh waves of birds through our area, generally under cover of darkness. Cuckoos, flycatchers, thrushes, vireos, warblers, and sparrows eat up the miles in extended night flights. Some—the Gray-cheeked Thrush is one—routinely overfly us, but we can

detect their vast flocks in the night sky by their distinctive flight calls. Among daytime migrators, hawks, eagles and vultures are masters of updrafts and the high airs, sailing economically while lesser birds must resort to laborious rowing.

Migrants can teach us to appreciate unprepossessing habitats. Manure on winter fields brings Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs. A sprawling commercial area might become hunting territory for a passing Merlin. Floating mats of despised aquatic weeds have been known to lure a Red-necked Phalarope down from the sky. But more often, degraded and fragmented habitats provide a sorer lesson when they cease to attract the discriminating breeders. We don't often scrutinize land appropriations for their impact on birds. By carelessly dispossessing them we may become dispossessed of them, and much other wealth besides. Our commitment to conserve scarce or threatened habitat stands between us and the likelihood that we and our children will lose yet more of our ecological heritage in the new century.

— Geo Kloppel

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## SPRING 2000 CALENDAR:

**April 29th, Sun., 12 pm: Annual Celebration** at the Foundation of Light near Ithaca. Join us for lunch, an exciting guest speaker, our annual business meeting and program update, and a hike at the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve! See insert for more information. Please send in your reservation form today!

**May 9, Wed., 5:30 pm: Wetlands Tour** of Jud and Sally Peck's land, 2623 Guyanoga Rd, Jerusalem, Yates County. Join representatives from the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Yates County, the NRCS and the Land Trust's Keuka Chapter as we explore the Peck's wetlands. Learn about the history and ecology of wetlands, look for wildlife, and find out about the NRCS's Wetland Reserve Program. We'll also help install Wood Duck boxes and Mallard nest tubes. Make sure to bring waterproof footwear! Call Debbie Koop at 315-595-3995 for more information.

**May 13, Sun., 2 pm: Bluebirds and Beyond—Mothers' Day Special** at the Stevenson Forest Preserve, Town of Enfield. Directions to the Preserve: Take route 327 south from route 79 (between Ithaca and Mecklenburg). Turn right on Trumbull Corners Rd. right after crossing a bridge. Continue about 1/2 mile to parking area, on the right.

**June 9, Sat., 8 am: Seeing Ceruleans** at the Salmon Creek Bird Sanctuary, led by ornithologist Ken Rosenberg. We will also be on the look-out for any breeding bird activity, for the new Atlas of Breeding Birds in NY Project. Meet at the intersection of Brooks Hill Rd. and Salmon Creek Rd., in Lansing (north of Ludlowville).

**June 9, Sat., 10 am: The 3 B'S at the Parker Preserve**, Town of Bath. Directions to the Preserve: Go west from Watkins Glen, following signs to Hammondsport and Tyrone. Just before Tyrone, turn left on route 226. Just past Bradford School, turn right on Yawger Hill Rd., then left (in Bradford) on Telegraph Rd. (a small sign points to "Bath"). Take this to Velie Rd., turn right, and park on left, just before the curve.

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.