



THE LAND STEWARD

Newsletter of the Finger Lakes Land Trust

Vol. 12, No. 1

working to protect the natural integrity of our region

Winter 1999-2000

New Conservation Easement Protects Hemlock and Canadice Lakes Watershed

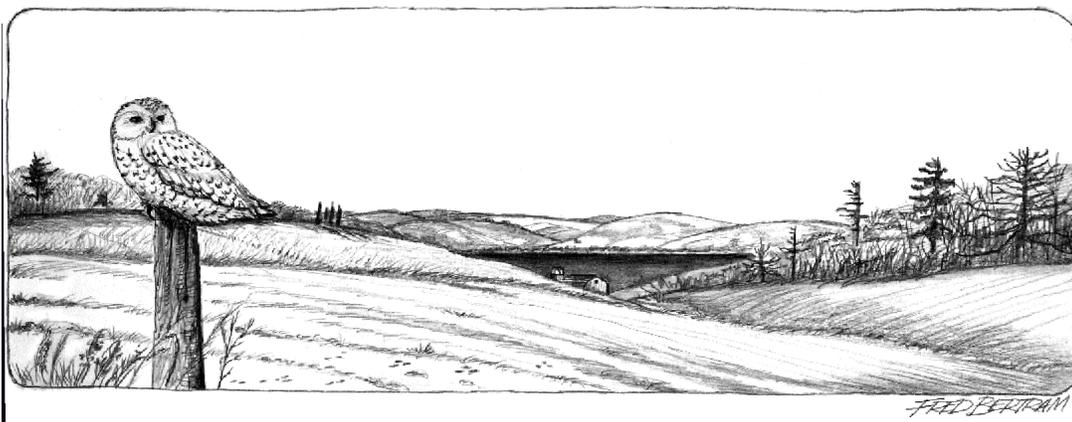
These days when Dick Dennison walks his 34-acre woodlot high on a ridge above Canadice Lake, he feels something different. "There is a satisfaction and a new peace of mind," he says, "knowing that the beauty of the woods and the wildlife habitat will be preserved."

This past September, Dick signed the conservation easement which insures permanent protection of his property. Ever since he purchased it in 1986, Dick has been working to protect and improve the land. A pond was one of the first additions; later Dick added a small orchard of apple trees and a row of

sugar maples. Oak-hickory forest, evergreen plantations, clearings, and brushland provide food and shelter for deer, grouse, and turkey. A network of trails winds among the trees and a simple rustic cabin overlooks the pond.

Dick, a long-time New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) member, is interested in

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Wesley Hill Campaign Launched in Autumn's Glory

We launched the fundraising campaign for the Wesley Hill Nature Preserve and Briggs Gully Conservation Area on October 24 with a walk at the preserve, attended by 40 Land Trust supporters and guests. Defying the weather forecast - which called for chilly rain and blustery snow - we were treated instead to a glorious, clear day of hiking through blazing fall colors. Betsy Darlington, Irene Szabo, Ray Oglesby and Chris White led small groups of guests on the two trails that had been laid out by Western Lakes Chapter volunteers. They were delighted to find, among other wonders, great patches of huckleberries and a red-eyed vireo nest as they wandered the forested hills of our new 90-acre preserve. We ended the day with hot cider and cookies around a campfire at the Wenrich cabin.

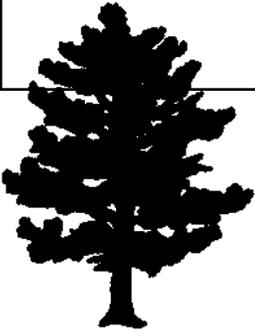
The fundraising is off to an equally auspicious start. Our goal is to raise \$175,000. The first \$100,000 is for acquisition, site management, and the perpetual stewardship of the Wesley Hill Preserve. The second phase of the campaign is to raise \$75,000 for outreach and education activities in the Honeoye Valley area and for additional land protection projects in the Briggs Gully Conservation Area.

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Sue Cosman, Kurt Seitz, Eileen Maxwell, and Betsy Darlington visit the ancient white oak at Wesley Hill Preserve.

PHOTO BY ERIC CUSHMAN



AT THE SIGN OF THE LONE PINE

Up in the clear, dry air of the Rockies, the largest Land Trust Alliance Rally ever was held this past October. Kat Lieberknecht, Bev Abplanalp, Board member Dick Ruswick, and I fanned out into the dozen or so concurrent workshops to

absorb the latest advice on topics such as defending conservation easements or running fundraising campaigns.

Throughout the Rally, I was struck by an emerging theme that seemed important to our work back home, as we enter a new century and identify our strategic goals for the next decade: land trusts are maturing in several dimensions. The older land trusts are beginning to learn (sometimes the hard way - in court) about the kind of monitoring and documentation needed to enforce the terms of conservation easements on lands now held by second generation landowners. Additionally, land trusts of all sizes are waking up to the necessity of raising truly adequate stewardship endowments for their protected properties. The urgent tone surrounding the conversations on easement enforcement and stewardship indicated how seriously we must work together to meet this challenge.

Still relatively low in volume, but clearly building into the next critical issue, were the concerns expressed about the ability of hundreds of land trusts to evolve their organizational management capacity to meet the challenges of their perpetual obligations. As land trusts mature, they generally focus on increasing their funding sources in order to support a professional and technical staff to organize and carry out the trust's programs. But for regional or statewide land trusts such as ours,

it is impossible for just a few staff members to respond to all of the land protection opportunities available.

That's why we need you. We need our members and supporters to make an investment in their own education on land use issues. We want to help you make this investment by offering several new educational features in our newsletter and by providing high quality workshops that teach the leadership and land conservation skills our volunteers need. Without our volunteers, our current level of activity would shrink considerably.

However, if we have even more members take on the challenge of volunteering, there is no doubt we will reach our strategic goal of having large, active chapters of volunteers working across the entire Finger Lakes Region on dozens of projects simultaneously.

In this issue, we introduce you to two new features. Merry Jo Bauer, a talented volunteer, has offered to write a column on federal and state initiatives affecting the work of land trusts (see insert). Volunteers can help immensely by helping to educate their elected representatives on these topics. The other new feature will be an essay series that illuminates many of the issues that face land trusts and the conservation movement. We

begin the series appropriately by offering an excerpt from Aldo Leopold's essay on a land ethic from *A Sand County Almanac*. We do this in celebration of our 10th anniversary and to honor Carl Leopold, our founding president. We hope you will enjoy these additions to *The Land Steward*, and will join us in teaching others about the importance of preserving the natural heritage of our region.

—Gay Nicholson, Executive Director

We need our members and supporters to make an investment in their own education on land use issues.

PRESERVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT Reorienting and Expanding Our Work, Seeking New Members

The Preserve Management Committee (PMC) is redefining what we do and how we intend to do it. During our early years we focused on crafting a management plan for each of the Land Trust's preserves. Now that most of these are in place, we want to assume a more active, hands-on involvement in preserve management.

Our current thinking has each PMC member taking on specific responsibili-

ties related to a certain preserve. These might include acting as a bridge between the PMC and the preserve steward(s), and reviewing and helping to implement the management plan for that preserve. The PMC will continue functioning as a whole—but we may get away with a reduced meeting frequency!

Our subcommittees are working to define our future functions in terms of: (1) interfacing with preserve stewards,

(2) recruiting new members for the PMC, and (3) identifying potential sources of expertise that might be needed in management. We certainly welcome any of you readers to look us over. You could also let me know of your interest(s) by e-mail (rto1@cornell.edu) and I'll get back to you.

—Ray Oglesby, Chair

From: A Sand County Almanac (1949)

By Aldo Leopold

All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts. His instincts prompt him to compete for his place in the community, but his ethics prompt him also to cooperate (perhaps in order that there may be a place to compete for).

The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land.

This sounds simple: do we not already sing our love for and obligation to the land of the free and the home of the brave? Yes, but just what and whom do we love? Certainly not the soil, which we are sending helter-skelter downriver. Certainly not the waters, which we assume have no function except to turn turbines, float barges, and carry off sewage. Certainly not the plants, of which we exterminate whole communities without batting an eye. Certainly not the animals, of which we have already extirpated many of the largest and most beautiful species. A land ethic of course cannot prevent the alteration, management, and use of these "resources," but it does affirm their right to continued existence, and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state.

In short, a land ethic changes the role of *Homo sapiens* from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such.

In human history, we have learned (I hope) that the conqueror role is eventually self-defeating. Why? Because it is implicit in such a role that the conqueror knows, *ex cathedra*, just what makes the community clock tick, and just what and who is valuable, and what and who is worthless, in community life. It always turns out that he knows neither, and this is why his conquests eventually defeat themselves. [...]

It is inconceivable to me that an ethical relation to land can exist without love, respect, and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value. By value, I of course mean something far broader than mere economic value; I mean value in the philosophical sense.

Perhaps the most serious obstacle impeding the evolution of the land ethic is the fact that our educational and economic system is headed away from, rather than toward, an intense, consciousness of land. [...]

The "key-log" which must be moved to release the evolutionary process for an ethic is simply this: quit thinking about decent land-use as solely an economic problem. Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and esthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.

It of course goes without saying that economic feasibility limits the tether of what can or cannot be done for land. It always has and it always will. The fallacy the economic determinists have tied around our collective neck, and which we now need to cast off, is the belief that economics determines all land-use. This is simply not true. An innumerable host of actions and attitudes, comprising perhaps the bulk of all land relations, is determined by the land-user's tastes and predilections, rather than by his purse. The bulk of all land relations hinges on investments of time, forethought, skill, and faith rather than on investments of cash. As a land-user thinketh, so is he.

I have purposely presented the land ethic as a product of social evolution because nothing so important as an ethic

is ever "written." Only the most superficial student of history supposes that Moses "wrote" the Decalogue; it evolved in the minds of a thinking community, and Moses wrote a tentative summary of it for a "seminar." I say tentative because evolution never stops.

The evolution of a land ethic is an intellectual as well as emotional process. Conservation is paved with good intentions which prove to be futile, or even



Carl Leopold in front of the cabin built by his father, Aldo Leopold.

dangerous, because they are devoid of critical understanding either of the land, or of economic land-use. I think it is a truism that as the ethical frontier advances from the individual to the community, its intellectual content increases.

This excerpt from A Sand County Almanac (1949) is reprinted with permission from the Aldo Leopold Foundation.

NEED A GREAT GIFT IDEA?

COME TO THE LAND TRUST!

Bird nesting boxes, Michael DeMunn's poster of the Finger Lakes, T-shirts, Biodiversity Preserve Certificates.

NEW! Neat forest green baseball caps with our logo, stunning note cards from Acorn Designs, featuring Susan Bull Riley's paintings of the Stevenson Forest Preserve and the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve.

Walking Lick Brook

On September 30, Bev Abplanalp and I had the pleasure of taking twelve Ithaca College students in the Writing as a Naturalist class and their professor, Marlene Kobrec, on a nature walk at the Sweedler Preserve at Lick Brook. Kobrec and her students came to observe nature, preparatory to writing about it. Here was their chance to get their hands on the earth, and see what it had to reveal in the wild state.

Bev suggested that we walk the first five minutes in silence. The day before it had rained, and the creek was finally bubbling after its summer-long silence. Our silent walk attuned us to our surrounds.

Our first stop was at a large white pine. We estimated it to be as much as 200 years old. We discussed the feel and texture of the bark, as well as the tree's commercial value.

With our silence broken, we examined each different species of tree from its roots to its crown. I showed the little pointed black leaf gall of the witch hazel, an understory tree. Curiously, the gall



Photo by Bev Abplanalp

Ithaca College professor Marlene Kobrec and her Writing as a Naturalist class

resembles a tiny cone-shaped witch's hat. Farther down the trail we came to a huge white oak that had broken and blown over, and saw the heart rot that brought it down.

As we walked along slowly, we saw all sorts of fungi—some good to eat, some that can kill. Here was a jewel puffball, tasty and sweet; next a poisonous amanita. And right in the middle of the trail, the hole to a chipmunk's den.

We came at last to the deep gorge known as the amphitheater. In the distance a turkey buzzard soared in lazy circles and a raven called. Ravens are cliff dwellers, and this raven reared young here this summer on the east side of the gorge. Ared cedar, the only one in the vicinity, clung to the lip of the gorge. A patch of sun lit up a few small blueberry bushes, white wood aster, some sarsaparilla plants, partridge berries, and white snakeroot.

One group of students, Bev with them, parted then to head back to their cars. I went on with the others. On an offbeat trail we found a snakeskin, likely from a black rat snake. We tried the taste of different acorns: the bitter red oak ones, the sweeter white oak ones. Thorny hawthorn trees dropped bright red fruit for wildlife to eat, and we discovered an early flush of ash boletes, a tasty mushroom. So engrossed were we that we hardly noticed the time - until Bev came tearing down the trail, looking for us!

—Hank Krauss

New Conservation Easement

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comparing the results of both active and passive forest management. Since the early '90s, Dick has followed a program of selective cutting to improve the health of the forest. One of his goals of the easement is to let some areas of oak-hickory forest advance to healthy old-growth.

Dick serves as well on the Pittsford Green Belt Association Board. The Green Belt Association works to encourage and educate the community in preserving open space.

This easement is also the culmination of the joint efforts of the Land Trust volunteers who worked with Dick through the years. Steve Lewandowski was first, back in 1987, when he helped Dick select the site for his pond. He passed the torch to Meg Ewing and Sara Kersting who helped Dick and his wife, Diane, decide about the Land Stewardship Registry, which they joined in 1995. Al Craig, Dick's neighbor and a fellow conservation easement donor, worked with Dick to define the type of

restrictions which would insure his vision for the future of his land. Al negotiated the precise terms of the easement, took photos, did



Dick and Diane Dennison



Dick Dennison and the friendly forest bear

the title research, wrote up the baseline documentation, and so on—in short, he saw the whole process through from beginning to end. Another long-time chapter member and active volunteer, Darlys McDonough—one of Dick's neighbors—will serve as the official steward for the Dennison easement.

The land is near two other easement properties: Al and Sybil Craig's, and the Malmendier-Kersting land. More and more land in this critical area is gradually gaining permanent protection, thanks to the perseverance of Western Lakes Chapter volunteers.

—Sara Kersting

Photos by Meg Ewing

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Hank Krauss

Volunteer Hank Krauss has probably spent more time literally immersed in nature than any of our volunteers.

Hank was born in Duluth, MN in 1929. A year later his family took up farming on 104 acres near Brooktondale in Tompkins County. Although it was during the Depression they managed to sell enough produce, milk and meat to keep going, and even to help less fortunate neighbors. Hank attended local schools and completed three years of high school in Candor.

He was married in 1953 and has six grown children, three daughters and three sons. His work experience is varied and includes jobs with Morse Chain, NCR, a foundry in Owego, and an asphalt and road materials plant in Ithaca. He has done construction work, truck driving, and served in the 11th Air Borne Division.

After separating from his wife, Hank took to the woods and led a solitary life in a series of small cabins that he built here and there in the town of Caroline. He lived on edible plants (he knows 41 of them) and venison given to him by hunters whom he had helped in building deer stands. Sometimes he wrote stories. He would spend hours sitting in one spot, watching what was going on around him, or lying in a stream to observe aquatic insects.

Hank now lives in Ithaca and spends his time helping others and sharing his woodsman's knowledge. He is a member of the Native Plant Society, the Tracking Club, and the Tompkins County Chapter of Keeping Track. He does odd jobs for



Photo by Betsy Darlington

his landlord and volunteers a lot of time for church groups.

In addition, Hank has become a devoted volunteer for the Land Trust, where he does office chores, joins work parties, and leads nature walks. Betsy Darlington says that he is so informative and charming and funny as a walk leader that participants don't want to leave when the walk is over. When Hank comes to the Land Trust office, cheers and hurrahs are released by the staff in recognition of his amazing contributions of

time and expertise to our mission. And the next time you visit the Whitlock Preserve, you can silently thank Hank for his dozens of hours spent helping to build those 80 steps!

—Ed Ormondroyd

That Boring Board...

The founders of a land trust have all the fun: get an acute vision one night, give birth, and save the local world crusading for open space. Raising money in those flushed early years is relatively easy, because there's nothing so alluring as a breathing, palpable cause, like a great green space full of brown-eyed furry creatures, heliotrope-chinned three-breasted twitwillers, and any two trees older than 100.

A land trust, however, must ensure its continuity in order to keep its promises. Contracts it has created with current landowners about the treatment their land will receive, say, 2000 years from now need to be honored, and we do them no honor if we as an organization are not alive and healthy then, capable of fielding stewards, monitors, and, if need be, squads of lawyers and angry public relations experts to defend that property against illicit treatment. What if the Whig Party, the League of Nations, or the defunct NY Central Railroad were holding YOUR easement?

A wise business manager sets goals and makes plans to attain them, devises contingency plans to cover failures, emergencies, loss of key people, and tries to imagine all the potential pitfalls lurking ahead in order to ensure the continuity of the enterprise. But well-laid business plans crash and burn left and right, leaving corporate corpses in their wake: for instance, the son of the founder seldom has that fire in the belly that made the parent a success. Or, does your 1999 favorite restaurant have the same owner as in 1989? So even though most businesses have a worthy reason for being... making money... many of them do not succeed at keeping themselves alive past the founders' lifetimes.

And what good are we if we do no better? Therefore, let's wave the flag of appreciation for those "drones" who are willing to work tedious hours on the vitally necessary tasks of ensuring our land trust's current and future health: those chairborne troopers of the paragraph command who bleed infinitives

and clauses redoing the By-Laws, those bravehearts who lead and cajole actual goals and plans out of each grumpy committee, and those board and committee members who are responsible for our fiscal adulthood.

These are the hard tasks that don't always garner nominations for "Conservationist of the Year," but we'd flame out like careless youth if sensible, responsible business heads weren't taking care of our organization. These remarks do not diminish the gifts of those working directly on our land protection projects, but let us not ignore those fussy old pokes among us who will keep the land trust alive and those projects protected. And when our members are asked to contribute to such "boring" goals as operating expenses, funds for organizational growth, office expansion, stewardship and defense funds, let us not stint those appeals.

...for we have promises to keep...

—Irene Szabo, Board President

FALL PICNIC

The Fall Picnic at Havana Glen in Montour Falls was great fun. We found spikenard, a sarsaparilla relative, in the glen, and wildlife rehabilitator Cindy Page brought her raptors and owls for her usual fascinating presentation that describes what to do if you find injured wildlife.



Photo by Hammon Strong

Cindy Page and her female red-tail hawk



Photo by Dev Adipati

Following a tremendous meal, Fall Picnic goers settled in to enjoy Cindy Page's raptors.



Photo by Dev Adipati

Your Friends and Neighbors played wonderful toe-tapping tunes for our Fall Picnic.

Petitions for candidates for the Board of Directors,

signed by at least 20 current members of the Land Trust, must be received by the Board President by

February 5, 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting on May 7.

“Survivor’s Benefit” Benefits Land Trust

I retired from Cornell University at the end of November 1999. As a New York State employee of a statutory college at Cornell, I was eligible for the Survivor’s Benefit Program. This allowed me to designate the Finger Lakes Land Trust as beneficiary of the \$3,000 benefit without cost to me, the employee. Upon my death, the Land Trust will receive the benefit to be used in the Stewardship Fund.

Why did I do this? Simply because I thought it was a good idea. Frankly, I hope it will be many years before the Land Trust gets this money, but, after I am gone to the great hiking trail in the sky, I will have left something behind to help protect the natural integrity of the Finger Lakes region. For information about this program, NYS employees may contact their personnel office or the Survivor’s Benefit Program, 18th floor, AESOB, Albany, NY 12244.

—Tom Reimers



Student volunteers recruited by On-Site Volunteers at Sweedler Preserve at Lick Brook



Jim Babcock, Cornell University mycologist, prospecting for fungi at the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve.



Cornell University International Students removing non-native invasive plants at our Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve.

Business Member Profile



Banfield and Associates, Inc., is one of the Land Trust's newest business members. David Banfield has lived in Ithaca all of his life, which is at least ten years longer than you would guess by looking at him. His early background reveals an Ithaca much different from now. He was a member of the last class that graduated from Ithaca High School when it was still in the Dewitt Building and used to be a life guard at Stewart Park when there was swimming there.

Banfield and Associates is actually located just down the street from the Land Trust's main office. David Banfield has been an insurance agent on Tioga Street for over thirty years offering auto, home, and business insurance.

David has been an avid appreciator of the region's natural environment all of his life. He has served as treasurer of the Cayuga Lake Conservation Association since its inception in the '60s as "Save Cayuga Lake." He has also served on the local Board of Public Works and as a Common Council member, working alongside Dan Hoffman.

A Licensed New York Guide, David has been visiting the Lick Brook area since long before it enjoyed Land Trust protection. He supports the Land Trust, "not just so my grandchildren will have access to these same places, but so that their children will as well." David's love of the area and appreciation for the need to protect the natural environment make him a clear candidate to be a business member of the Land Trust.

"I had been aware of the Land Trust and knew that it existed," David said. "John Semmler told me about the new business membership program and suggested that I become a business member. I asked him to send me the information and I joined."

David's story makes it impossible not to wonder how many other potential business partners there are in the Finger Lakes area who would become enthusiastic business members if only they were asked. If you know of a business that would be interested in our new business membership program, please call Assistant Director Bev Abplanalp.

—Allen Quirk

Wish List

Acopy of the *Chicago* or *New York Public Library Manual of Style*; a copy of the DeLorme *New York State Gazetteer*; lopping shears, hedge clippers, pruners; light-weight card table and/or light-weight portable folding table; any of the following topographic maps: Bristol Springs, Campbell, Corning, Middlesex, Naples, Prattsburg, Pulteney; and a volunteer to do our newsletter layout

CHAPTER REPORTS

Seneca Chapter

Thanks to Land Trust member Adam Arcadi, the Martin Preserve has attained a new level of “no hunting” visibility. Added to those already existing along the town roads are many new “no hunting signs” that sport the Land Trust logo. As the old adage says, “You can’t miss ‘em”!

With the help of adjoining property owners Frank Garrison and Sam Yaskoviak, Adam has also been rechecking the preserve’s boundary lines. Frank Garrison and his family recently purchased the late Bill Slovik’s property and, fortunately for the Land Trust, have also taken over Bill’s stewardship inclinations. We’re fortunate to have such a great environmental family living above the Martin Preserve and appreciating it as much as the Garrison Family does!

In many of his endeavors Adam is assisted by son Teal, a home schooler who is well on his way to becoming an excellent Land Truster. Thank you Frank and Sam and Adam and Teal - You leave good footprints for the rest of us to follow.

And finally a hard-to-say “Goodbye” to Seneca Chapter charter members Anne and John Elder. They’ve have spent many hours on Junk Duty, trail clearing, and imparting to second graders a special kind of love of the natural world. The Elders are moving to the Washington DC area to be closer to their daughter and her family. Our good wishes go with them.

—Irene Brown, Chapter Chair

Wedded Bliss

Our special thanks to
Candace Cornell
for her donations
in honor of the weddings of:

Tahnee Robertson
& Lawrence Fisher,
and
Tad McGalliard
& Sharon Goskoski

Keuka Chapter

Our booth at the Hunt Country Branchport Festival on October 2nd and 3rd brought us a list of volunteers and some sizeable donations. We were pleased with the number of interested people who wanted to learn more about land preservation and the Finger Lakes Land Trust. We also sponsored wildlife rehabilitator Cindy Page who brought her raptors to the festival for an awesome demonstration and talk about wildlife rehabilitation.

Just six days later, on October 9th, we co-sponsored a bird migration tour to Hamlin State Park and Braddock’s Bay with Cornell Cooperative Extension in Yates County. The trip was fascinating and the weather was gorgeous. Five biologists and ornithologists from the Braddock Bay Raptor Association led the tour. The migratory bird research stations along Lake Ontario were the first stop of the day. We learned how to use spotting scopes to identify and count migrating birds. Next we observed banding procedures at the songbird banding station. Our third stop was Braddock’s Bay, alive with both rare and common species of ducks and waterfowl. The day ended with an up-close “Birds of Prey” demonstration by the Raptor Association.

Land Trust member Debbie Koop has been appointed to the Farm Protection Board in Yates County as a representative of the Keuka Chapter. The board has written its Farm Protection Plan and is currently finishing the accompanying Agricultural District Review. Once the plan is in place, Yates County will qualify for NY State’s Purchase of Development Rights Program. With agriculture as its primary industry, Yates County has a big stake in this program.

Debbie also represents the Land Trust on the Yates County Watershed Alliance Committee. The Keuka Chapter hopes to be instrumental in helping preserve lands surrounding crucial watershed areas as well as in working to preserve crucial farm land and scenic vistas of Keuka Lake.

—Debbie Koop, Chapter Chair

Buy Cards by Acorn Designs

One of our business members needs your support! Former board member and long-time Land Trust supporter Steve Sierigk’s cabin burned down this past November. The cabin had been lovingly hand-crafted by Steve over a dozen years.



PHOTO BY SUSAN TUNNILL

Steve Sierigk at the Elegant Garden Party

It was a total loss and, due to its remote location, uninsured. Steve’s commitment to environmental integrity and community is well known. Steve is chair of our Membership Committee and was one of the first to join our Business Membership Program. His company, Acorn Designs, has pioneered the use of recycled paper and ecologically safe inks. You can help Steve rebuild his dream by purchasing his beautiful note cards which can be found in numerous outlets across the Finger Lakes Region. You may write Steve at 5066 Mott Evans Rd., Trumansburg, NY 14886.

LAND FOR SALE:

FOR SALE BY LAND TRUST: beautiful 48-acres with conservation easement in the hills of South Danby.

HEMLOCK LAKE: Conservation-minded buyer wanted. 40+ acres, breathtaking views overlooking Hemlock Lake, abundant wildlife; adjoins 100 acres that will be protected by conservation easement. Terms available. Call (716) 346-0582.

BARN/HOUSE AND 16 ACRES with conservation easement, on German Cross Rd., near Six-Mile Creek in Dryden. Call 505-743-0074.

ABUTTING FINGER LAKES NATIONAL FOREST: 40-acre parcel on Chicken Coop Hill Road with conservation easement, 15-acre woodlot, sweeping views, gently sloping fields. Trumansburg School District. Call (607) 387-8080.

Voices of the Earth Program

Author Jen Hill entertained sixty-five people with accounts from her new anthology of bird watching literature, *An Exhilaration of Wings*, at the Women's Community Building in Ithaca on October 17. The reading was part of the Land Trust's Voices of the Earth series and was co-sponsored by The Bookery. Jen's collection, published by Viking, spans the late 18th century to the present and includes both famous and little-known writers. Selections included:

- an Englishman's description of rooks gathering so much nesting material that much of it must be dumped to the ground

- a doctor's fussy prescription of what to wear, eat and drink on a birding trip
- a small birder characterized by his adult self as even grubbier than small boys in general.*

Jen Hill is a PhD candidate at Cornell. *Taken from essays by Humorist Jerome K. Jerome, American ornithologist Dr. Elliott Coues, and Theodore Roosevelt.

—Ed Ormondroyd

Volunteer Thank You's

For creating and donating the beautiful stained glass window that we awarded to Betsy Darlington as our Conservationist of the Decade: **Gary Harrison**

(This thank you was inadvertently omitted from the Summer 1999 Land Steward)

For legal assistance: **Elena Flash, William Joint, Peter Miller, Dick Ruswick**

For providing original art-work for each of our newsletters: **Fred Bertram**

For donating badly needed topo maps, thus filling in much of the gap in our inventory for the region: **Eastern Mountain Sports, in Rochester, David Banfield, and Connie Thomas**

For hard work at our preserves: **Adam Arcadi, Al Cardinale, Don Cobb, Betsy Darlington, Erin Hewett, Geo Kloppel, Hank Krauss, Ray Oglesby, John Smith; 46 students at the Johnson School of Management at Cornell (recruited by On-Site Volunteers); 10 students in the "Community Plunge" program at Ithaca College; 10 Cornell University students from On-Site Volunteers**

For leading great nature walks at our nature preserves: **Betsy Darlington, Krissy Faust, Hank Krauss, Bob**

Wesley, Ray Oglesby, Irene Szabo, and Chris White

For helping with the Gray House open house: **Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services, Betsy Darlington, Brian DeYoung, Brad Edmondson, Hank Krauss, Kat Lieberknecht, Danika MacLellan, Ray Oglesby, Judy Pierpont, Mary Woodsen**; for extensive legal help with the closing: **Dick Ruswick**; and for seeing the renovation project through, from beginning to end: **Brad Edmondson**

For being our master tool-fixer: **Hank Krauss**

For donating a great log hook: **Walter Pintner**; and for donating two pairs of loppers: **Jane Mead**

For help at the Fall Picnic: **Irene Brown, Susan Hurwitz, Jon Dember, Nancy Spero, Vikki Armstrong, Gail Blake, Jennifer Dotson, and Susan Austern**

For donating the ever-useful *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide*: **Connie Thomas**

For once again donating a subscription to *The Conservationist*: **Molly Adams**

For letting us use their historic barn for our October gathering of conservation easement landowners and

stewards: **Arch and Esther Dotson**; for letting us have a wonderful walk on their land: **the Dotsons and Ed and Joycelyn Hart**; For helping with the event: **Kat Lieberknecht**; for giving us a very entertaining and enlightening talk about how assessments of conservation easement lands work: **Steve Whicher, Director of Tompkins County's Assessment Dept.**; and for leading a fascinating walk to learn about past land use practices from today's landscape: **Ecologist Peter Marks**

For help with the Cool Meetings on Hot Topics Workshop: **Michael Culotta, Betsy Darlington, Bill Hecht, Kat Lieberknecht, Carolyn Long, Ree Thayer**

For many hours of help in the office: **Merry Jo Bauer, Mandy Beem-Miller, Harriet Budke, Emily Eisman, Connie Kaiser, Hank Krauss, Silas Townsend, Ree Thayer, Carl Leopold**

For organizing the summer's Talks and Treks series: **Meg Ewing and Sara Kersting** (Honeoye), **Bill Hecht** (Skaneateles); For leading a walk or giving a talk at one of our summer Talks and Treks: **Cindy Page, Ryan Aleva, Bernd Blossey, R.R.**

Johnson, Bill Legg, Pattie Weisse, Harry Greer, Mary Stebbins, Gunther Fishgold, Ward Stone, Rob Howard, Bill Brice, Bill Kappel, Dave Atkins, Amy Samuels, Nelson Hairston, Jeff Fiore, Jeff Carmichael, Tom Higgins, Jeanne Wenrich, Mike Allen, Steve Kress, Ron Walker, Christopher White, Anne Terninko, Mary Gleason, Frank Smith, Edith Davey, Steve Lewandowski, Jim Secosky, Donna Nichols, UR Graduate students at the Mees Observatory, Randy Wall

For showing the Honeoye First United Church group the Canadice Lake wetlands: **Mona Rynearson**

For designing our beautiful Wesley Hill Preserve fundraising brochure: **Tanya Olsen of Messenger Post Publications**

For helping with the booth at the Hunt Country Branchport Festival: **Debbie Koop, Lisa Saether, Lynda Rommel**

For help in ways too numerous to list: **All members of the Board and Committees, conservation easement and nature preserve donors, and easement and preserve stewards.**

Wesley Hill Campaign

continued from page 1

We are delighted and proud to announce an anonymous gift of \$55,000 from a Land Trust member for the Wesley Hill campaign. As an incentive to assure completion of the acquisition and stewardship phase, this generous donor has issued a challenge to the Land Trust community. For every \$100 that other supporters contribute, our mystery donor will contribute an additional \$50 for Wesley Hill's protection. So far, the Western Lakes Chapter, Board, staff, and friends of the Land Trust have contributed over \$12,000 in this challenge grant campaign - earning an additional \$6,000 for Wesley Hill, and bringing our total to over \$73,000!

This is an encouraging beginning for the campaign, but we need to raise an additional \$18,000 by June 2000 to take full advantage of the matching grant. Our donor is



Photo by Betsy Darlington

October 24 nature walk at Wesley Hill

Kersting (716-367-2301). Beginning in January, the chapter will resume monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the office of the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Task Force in the old RG&E building on Clark Street. Call Meg or Sara for more details.

The Wesley Hill and Briggs Gully campaign will help us create a legacy of great biological importance in the Honeoye Inlet Valley. Our conservation goal is to work toward permanent protection of the biological corridor running from the eastern wall of the valley, across the wetlands in the inlet, and up the western forested wall of this remote and beautiful place. It is a glorious feeling to stand at the edge of Briggs Gully and sweep your eyes over its undisturbed landscape. What a gift to the people of the next millennium! Let's make sure they can do the same thing.

—Meg Ewing



Photo by Betsy Darlington

Susan and Eric Cosman, Wesley Hill Stewards

willing to match up to \$30,000 of new funds with \$15,000 of his own. With your help, we can do it! If you would like to make a contribution, please use the reply envelope in this newsletter, and let us know that your donation is for the Wesley Hill campaign. And if you know of others (individuals, organizations, businesses or corporations) who you believe would be interested in helping, please let us know. All gifts are tax deductible and may be in the form of appreciated assets such as stock (equities), real property, or collections (e.g. coins), etc. Gifts of

Memorial Contributions

We are deeply grateful for the donations given to the Land Trust in memory of:

Cynthia H. Collum,
from Candace Cornell

George Gibian,
from Stephanie Behler,
Tom Butler and Family,
Hans and Rose Bethe,
Barbara and Thomas Block,
Val Bunce,

Marvin Carlson,
Florence and Gardner Clark,
Kenneth and Betty Evett,
David Feldshuh and
Martha Frommelt,
Yvonne Fisher,
Helen Garvey,
Andrea Gladstone,
Katherine Gottschalk,
Ron Herring,
Eva and Herbert Kufner,
Kit Lambert,

Gladys and James McConkey,
Wendy and Kelly Popplewell
and Erin,

Ross Rockwell,
Terri and Brady Secord,
Kevin, Alicia, and Derek Secord,
Caroline Spicer,
Cushing and Jean P. Strout,
Beverly Baker and Baker Travel,
Gordon and Patricia Kirkwood.

BREAD CARD FOLLOW-UP:

If you are a member, please note that your bread card can only be used at the Ithaca Bakery shop on Route 13, NOT at any of the branches. Thank you!

Finger Lakes Land Trust and Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Service Cooperate To Restore Home

On October 29, the Finger Lakes Land Trust held an open house to celebrate the gift and sale of the former home of Richard Gray at 302 Utica Street, Ithaca.

Gray died in a tragic canoeing accident on May 13, 1998, when he was 47 years old. At the time of his death, he was an alderperson representing the 5th Ward, a supporter of the Land Trust, and a member of the Tompkins County Citizens Planning Alliance.

"Rick moved to Ithaca to go to graduate school, and he loved Ithaca so much that he just stayed," said his mother, Ida Mary Gray, who lives near Toledo, Ohio. "After he died, my husband, George, and I had to decide what to do with the house. It needed a lot of work, and we lived too far away to supervise it."

"Then at the memorial service we heard how Rick had been involved with the Land Trust, and how much it meant to him. So we asked the Land Trust if they thought it was feasible to take on renovating and selling the house, and using the proceeds as a donation."

"It was risky for us," said Brad Edmonson, past president of the Land Trust. "As a nonprofit dedicated to land protection, we were venturing pretty far from our mission. Yet we wanted to pay tribute to Rick and his family."



Photo by Gay Nicholson

Kat Lieberknecht and Rick Huber, General Contractor, at the Gray House

It wasn't an easy job. "The building was structurally sound," Edmondson said, "but it needed everything else -- new plumbing and wiring, and all new walls, floors, and roof. So we asked Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Service (INHS) for help. It was a collaboration between two non-profits that you don't find very often."

Sue Perlgut, Director of Development and Community Relations at INHS, was enthusiastic from the start. "INHS was really pleased to be the renovator, and to bring our expertise to the aid of another organization," Perlgut said. "Our mission is to work together with businesses and home-owners. It was great to extend that mission to the Land Trust. And it always feels good to help

another house become a home."

The third party in the collaboration was the buyer, Adriana Rovers. INHS provided the know-how and skill for the renovation. But Rovers became deeply involved in the project, and turned it into a complete restoration of the property as well.

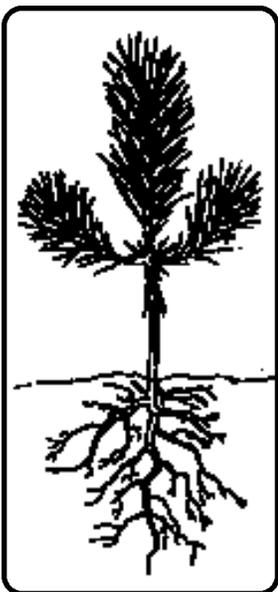
Ida Mary and George Gray drove in from Ohio to attend the open house, along with Rick's two brothers. "We were really glad we went," said Mrs. Gray. "It was hard in a way, but we were happy, too. This has been a wonderful solution for everyone concerned."

The Land Trust intends to use the proceeds from the sale of the Gray house as the seed money in its own search for a permanent home. —Mary Woodsen



Photo by Hank Krauss

Rick Gray's brother Robert and Bev Abplanalp at the Gray House Open House October 29



Tap Root

FIRST WORDS.

These are the words that begin each gathering of like-minded people. They are given in thanksgiving. These words honor the circle of all that is green providing habitat for birds, animals, insects, and people. Their rhythm, tone, and intent create remembering. To each of you who has welcomed me, I thank you.

Our Finger Lakes are located at the heart of New York State where water flows outward to the sea through creeks, canals, Great Lakes, and rivers. The health and well being of these waters rest in our hands. It was a privilege for me to swim across Cayuga Lake this summer. It was the dream of a lifetime. As a child I was very tall and quite lanky which made it difficult to float on my back; I failed my beginner's test the first time. Even today, if I were to lie still with my lungs jam packed full of air and my arms outstretched, my body would assume it's natural floating position with my feet pointing to the bottom and my head about eight inches or so under water. This makes breathing out of the question. I would have never thought it possible for me to learn to swim, let alone save a young man from drowning, and certainly not swim across the largest Finger Lake. Life has offered me many opportunities for sharing in its well being. Coming to work on behalf of the Finger Lakes Land Trust is terrific.

On my first day of work, I was traveling west with Gay along Route 17 to meet up with Irene in Bath. An eagle flew in to greet us. We were filled with awe and I felt exhilaration at seeing an eagle in New York State, here in our region. More importantly it shows me that our members, volunteers, supporters, and staff will work together and accomplish great deeds.

—Bev Abplanalp, Assistant Director

FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST

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Finger Lakes Land Trust

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WINTER 2000 CALENDAR:

Jan. 15, Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.: X-C SKIING & POETRY READING, at the Wesley Hill Preserve and the Gell Center. Sponsored by Writers & Books. Ski the Wesley Hill Preserve, then return to the Gell Center on West Hollow Rd., Naples to hear Tom Ward read his winter poetry and prose. Call Kathy Pottetti, Writers & Books (716/473-2590) for details and reservations.

February 5, Sat. 1 p.m.: TRACKING HEFFALUMPS AND OTHER CREATURES, at the Wesley Hill Preserve, led by Angie Yeatman. Join us as we ski, snowshoe or walk the preserve in search of animal tracks. Bring your children! Wesley Road is off Gulick Rd., north of Cumming Nature Center in South Bristol. Call Meg Ewing (716/394-5436) for details.

February 13, Sun. 2 p.m.: VOICES OF THE EARTH: THE WORLD OF JOHN BURROUGHS by Edward Kanze. This reading is co-sponsored by The Bookery and is held at the Women's Community Building, corner of Cayuga and Seneca Sts., Ithaca, in the auditorium.

Feb. 27, Sun. 1 p.m.: WINTER WALK, at the Bishop Preserve on W. River Rd. in Fayette. Fred Bertram and Don Cobb will show us the wonders of this preserve, where owls and other creatures take refuge in winter. Bring skis or snowshoes if you like. From Geneva, go east on route 5 & 20. Turn south (right) onto route 96A. Cross the bridge over the canal, and make first left, on West River Rd. Park opposite house #536. From Ithaca, take route 96 north, then 96A. Just before the bridge over the canal, take a right on West River Rd. Park opposite house #536. Call Meg Ewing (716/394-5436) for details.

April 2, Sun. 2 p.m.: APRIL FOOL'S WEEKEND at the Etna Preserve (come see what's hoppin' and poppin'!), led by Chris Tessaglia-Hymes. From Rt 13 NE of Ithaca, take Rt 366 north, just beyond the NYSEG plant. Preserve is on both sides of the road, before the first intersection. Park opposite the cemetery.

May 7, Sun. 1 p.m.: ANNUAL MEETING-watch for details in the Spring *Land Steward!*

WALKS GO, RAIN, SUN, OR SNOW. BRING FOOD AND WATER.
CALL THE LAND TRUST (607) 275-9487 FOR DETAILS.