

OPEN SPACE NEWS

ORANGE COUNTY LAND TRUST

FALL 2007 NEWSLETTER AND 2006 ANNUAL REPORT

PROTECTING YOUR LOCAL TREASURES



View from Goosepond Mountain from McNeil Farm in Chester

OCLT AND ORANGE COUNTY: PARTNERS IN LAND PRESERVATION

Four Farms to Receive Open Space Funds

Four farms in Orange County will receive almost \$1.3 million in county open space grant awards this year, two as part of a cooperative effort between Orange County and the Orange County Land Trust, forever preserving nearly 500 acres of working farmland.

The Kirby Farm in the town of Wawayanda, the Stewart/Barcarella Farm in the town of Greenville and the Weiss Farm in the town of Warwick are the recipients of grants from the county for the purchase of each property's development rights. These deeded restrictions placed on farmland prohibit

the land from being subdivided and developed, yet allow the land to continue being farmed and used for other agricultural purposes in perpetuity. The fourth farm, the 150-acre McNeil Farm in Chester, will be purchased with a combination of county and state funds, and will become part of Goosepond State Park. Combining the McNeil Farm with state parkland and the adjacent Chester Commons Town Park will result in a contiguous corridor of open space, valuable for its scenic beauty and important for wildlife habitation.

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LAND TRUST MOVES INTO NEW OFFICE SPACE

Supported by Mayor Duncanson, Grant from Assemblywoman Gunther



Middletown Mayor Marlinda Duncanson at Mills House dedication with Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther and OCLT Executive Director Jim Delaune

The Orange County Land Trust has officially moved into the historic Mills House at 10 Mulberry Street in downtown Middletown. The former family home of the Land Trust's founder and first Orange County Executive Louis V. Mills, the Mills House is a Victorian-era home currently owned by the City of Middletown and with whom the Land Trust has entered into an option to buy agreement.

Middletown Mayor Marlinda Duncanson, and Assemblywoman Aileen M. Gunther both played an integral role in the Land Trust's move and purchase option. Mayor Duncanson gave her legislative support to the Land Trust's lease and option to buy agreement.

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friend:

After hiking last week with Andres Rodriguez on a beautiful cool fall afternoon, I began thinking of how the land really is for everyone to learn from, to enjoy, and ultimately, our responsibility to take care of. Andres, who is blind, experiences nature in a way different than I

or any other sighted person would experience. But his experience was profound and moving for him. I was reminded that day of the Haida Native American proverb I had heard several years ago:

“We do not inherit the land from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”

The land we protect today will remain protected for many generations to come so that each generation may experience nature for themselves, and be moved by it, in their own way. That is why we are here. We at your local land trust are honored with your support and your trust in allowing us to preserve the best of Orange County—our beautiful fields, forests, wetlands, ridgelines and river corridors and of course, working farmland. The majority of our funding is from generous contributions from our individual donors like you and your neighbors. We are proud to report that most of our funds raised go directly to land preservation, with only 18% of our costs towards the administrative costs of running and staffing of an office.

Thank you again for your continued support. Please stop by and visit us at 10 Mulberry Street in downtown Middletown.

James Delaune
Jim

Order Your Orange County Land Trust 2008 Calendar

Our beautiful 2008 calendar features the award-winning photography of Sugar Loaf resident Nick Zungoli. Now available for purchase on our website at oclt.org, or by calling our office at (845) 343-0840.

A limited supply will be available at participating merchants.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

| | |
|--|---|
| OCLT 2008 Calendar Sale | November-December Online and at participating merchants |
| OCLT Annual Holiday Party | Friday, December 14 5-7 pm 10 Mulberry St., Middletown |
| Family Hikes and Outings “Winter Tracks & Signs” “Owl Prowl” | January: check website for date and time February: check website for date and time |
| Financial Planning Seminar | Saturday, February 2 8:30 a.m. -12:00 noon 10 Mulberry St., Middletown |
| 16th Annual Northeast Land Trust Alliance Conference | April 10-12, 2008 The Thayer Hotel West Point, NY |
| OCLT Annual Dinner & Awards | May/June 2008 |

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Land Trust Moves into New Office Space

*Supported by Mayor Duncanson,
Grant from Assemblywoman Gunther*

Assemblywoman Gunther has provided the land trust with a grant from her office for needed renovations.

According to Executive Director James Delaune, the relocation marks an exciting time for the Orange County Land Trust. “This move into larger office space will enable us to grow and conserve more land in and around Orange County, preserving more of what makes this area a beautiful place to live.”

He added that “the work we did in retrofitting the building for our needs was in keeping with our philosophy of utilizing green building materials and techniques. We are also practicing what we preach by supporting smart growth initiatives. One of the best ways to preserve open space is to revitalize our downtown areas and concentrate growth in our population centers.”

Special thanks also go to our board member Francis Wickham who was able to retain the architectural integrity of the building and use green and recycled materials throughout, Ken Abt and First Federal Savings of Middletown for their donation of much needed office furniture, and David Hamling of Zircar Ceramics who provided a crew of painters.

Built in the 1880’s, the home was in the Mills’ family for several generations. Most recently, it served as the home of the Mulberry House Senior Citizens Center. Family pictures and memorabilia will be on permanent display in the office and visitors are always welcome.

OCLT Staff

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| James Delaune..... | Executive Director |
| Caroline Hamling..... | Development Director |
| Sarah Hutton..... | Office Manager |
| Joseph Luchi..... | Development Associate |
| Debbie Martucci..... | Bookkeeping Consultant |
| John McVay..... | Director of Stewardship |
| Karin Roux..... | Wallkill River Task Force Coordinator |

WHY A LAND TRUST?

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

A Land Trust is an independent, nonprofit organization that assists landowners who voluntarily want to preserve their land for future generations. Land trusts, like the Orange County Land Trust, work in partnership with government and individual property owners in voluntarily acquiring and



Orange County Scene

managing land, researching open space priority areas and advocating for open space planning. The benefit of working with a land trust is that land trusts are local organizations, directed and staffed by people who live in the communities they serve and who are in tune with local needs and values. Also, land trusts are organized as charitable organizations. Nonprofit status allows land trusts to accept gifts of land and donations of conservation easements and money, allowing donors a charitable gift income tax deduction. The charitable gift income tax deduction for a placement of an easement is typically the difference between the appraised value of the property before a conservation easement placement and the appraised value after its placement. In some cases, a conservation easement may also result in a reduction in local property taxes.

Currently, the Orange County Land Trust has preserved over 2,500 acres of land throughout the county. We operate seven preserves open to the public, free of charge, yet most of the land we have preserved in Orange County is private property, preserved through the voluntary placement of a conservation easement by the property's owner. A conservation easement is a legally binding promise to permanently preserve some or all of your land. It is a deeded restriction placed on the property that transfers with its sale and remains in effect in perpetuity. Each easement is tailored to the property owner's preferences and circumstances, as well as his or her future vision for the property. Conservation easements may not restrict all future uses of a property, but are designed to minimize its impact on the environment and local resources. For example, a farmer may still farm the land and may still build a structure to help

him farm the land, according to the specifics of his particular easement, but may not alter the use of the property by, for example, subdividing and building residences. Similarly, a landowner may wish to place a conservation easement on mountainside property, allowing the public to hike and enjoy its natural areas and scenic views. Another property owner may wish their property to remain private and their easement anonymous. Whatever the terms you stipulate in your conservation agreement with the land trust, the land trust is responsible-ethically and legally- to ensure that the terms of your agreement are carried out forever, according to your wishes for the property.

The placement of a conservation easement can also protect viable farmland so that future generations can remain farming in our communities. Many in our communities today recognize the value in preserving our working farms not only for their scenic beauty and valuable open space, but as a way to preserve our region's rural character - an integral part of our history and agricultural heritage.

Key Facts About Conservation Easements:

- The property is still owned by the conservation easement donor and remains on the tax rolls.
- The conservation easement transfers with the sale of the property and can be placed on all or a just a portion of the property.
- Conservation easements are tailored to the property owner's preferences and clearly stipulate what types of future development and use will be allowed.
- The placement of a conservation easement entitles landowners to significant state and federal income tax deductions and a possible decrease in local property taxes.
- Land Trusts are legally responsible for ensuring that the terms of each conservation easement agreement are being followed in perpetuity and monitor each property with a site inspection on an annual basis.

"A conservation easement is one of the most powerful and effective tools available for the permanent conservation of private lands in the United States..."

-The Nature Conservancy

THE WALLKILL RIVER: LINKING COMMUNITIES THROUGH OUR SHARED AGRICULTURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

OCLT Coordinates Large Scale Planting at Benedict Farm in Montgomery to Protect Banks of Wallkill Tributary

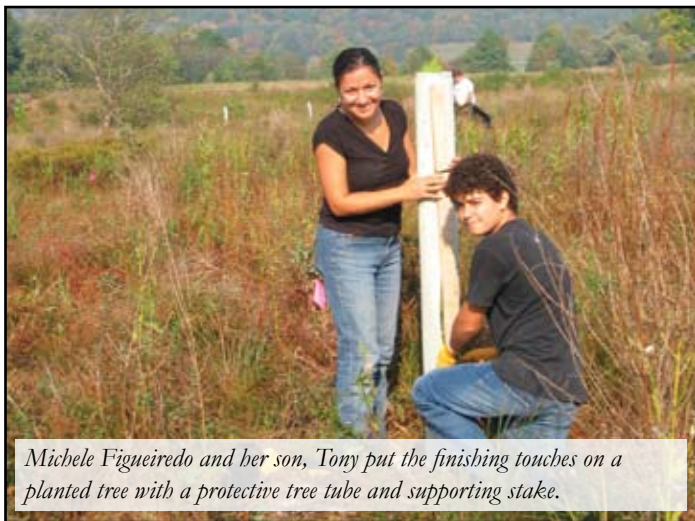
By Karin Roux
Wallkill River Task Force Coordinator

As part of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Hudson River Estuary Program's "Trees for Tribs" initiative, the Orange County Land Trust coordinated a large scale planting of over 500 trees and shrubs in October along the banks of the Muddy Kill, a tributary of the Wallkill River.

About 40 volunteers from the community, including several Boy Scout troops, spent many hours at Benedict Farm Park in the Town of Montgomery helping to plant shrubs and trees along streamside banks.

Called riparian buffers, these streamside plantings are a major component to maintaining healthy streams and water. Composed of trees, shrubs and grasses, these buffers help to reduce pollution entering waterways by slowing down and filtering runoff, thus extending retention time. Buffers also help to reduce flooding and erosion by stabilizing shorelines and absorbing high velocity flows. In addition, they serve an important role for wildlife as a shoreline transition zone and travel corridor, and can contribute to an increase in overall biodiversity within a region.

The planting project was a combined effort of the Orange County Land Trust, Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Town of Montgomery Conservation Advisory Council and Supervisor Susan Cockburn's office. The Town of Montgomery Highway Department contributed by drilling 500 holes at the site the day before the planting. The combined efforts of our volunteer, organizations and agencies gave the planting the feeling of a true community event. At a time when we hear so much about the loss of a sense of community, it was encouraging and heartwarming to see so many people give of themselves to a project that will benefit the community at large.



Michele Figueiredo and her son, Tony put the finishing touches on a planted tree with a protective tree tube and supporting stake.



Scouts from Troop 416 of Washingtonville work together to plant trees and shrubs.

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OCLT and Orange County: Partners in Land Preservation *Four Farms to Receive Open Space Funds*

"Land protection and preservation is necessary for fast growing Orange County as a means of safeguarding our scenic vistas and our rural, agricultural heritage," said Douglas McBride, president of the Orange County Land Trust. "It is also important to ensure that agriculture remains a viable industry in the county."

Orange County and the Orange County Land Trust have a long history of working together on open space initiatives. The two have cooperated in developing an open space master

plan that designates priority conservation and protection areas in the county which conforms to New York State priority protection criteria. The county relies upon the Orange County Land Trust to provide its expertise in placing conservation easements, conducting site monitoring, assuring deed compliance, and maintaining and storing important legal documentation.

CREATE YOUR CONSERVATION LEGACY:

Leave a Lasting Gift to the Orange County Land Trust

By making a contribution to our endowment fund, you can be assured your gift will grow and continue to benefit land preservation efforts in your community for generations to come. The following is a profile of one of Orange County's most prominent businessmen- a member of our Board of Directors and a long-time supporter of the Orange County Land Trust. Jacques Levine established the Jacque and Florence Levine Endowment Fund through the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan Counties. Gifts to our endowment funds are invested and the interest creates an annual supply of income to fund the land trust and give us the financial security to continue our mission of preserving the beautiful ridgelines, watershed regions and working farms throughout the county.

Our Legacy Leader: Jacques Levine



“Why do I give to the Orange County Land Trust? One evening, many years ago, Lou and Cheech Mills and Florence and I were sitting together at a social event. At one point, I remember someone asking “Why are we here?” and we began speaking about why we live here and choose to remain in Orange County, running businesses and raising families.

“It was a real question for we were active people who had established and supported other organizations that had accomplished much in the county. Lou especially, as the first county executive and the youngest Middletown mayor at the time, had succeeded in setting an example for county-wide volunteerism.

“It was then apparent that we might be losing the very things that we loved about living here. Our beautiful Orange County was being overrun with development and all indicators suggested that more growth was headed our way. We could either watch it happen or we could try to manage it. We realized there was no existing organization that was planning for this anticipated growth nor any organization making an effort to preserve the many special places that make this county a great place to live. Thus was born the idea for a land trust- a private, non profit organization to preserve these lands and advocate for open space planning and managed growth and development within our communities. I established this endowment fund for the land trust in memory of my wife, so that the land trust can continue, long after I am gone, to ensure that these beautiful places are left for others to experience and appreciate.”

Jacques Levine, President
Jacques Levine Shoes
Middletown, NY

Keith Stewart and Flavia Barcarella of Greenville will receive funds from the county for the purchase of development rights (PDR) to their organic produce farm. Keith, who sells his produce at NYC's Union Square Greenmarket, wrote a book *“It's a Long Road to a Tomato”* about his organic farming experiences, and has launched a campaign to discourage the use of the ubiquitous, nonbiodegradable plastic grocery bag. The Orange County Land Trust joins Keith in encouraging our supporters to reuse and recycle!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR MANY VOLUNTEERS:

Volunteers serve the land trust in various capacities and we wouldn't be able to preserve and manage the land without the generous giving of their time and talent. Volunteers in our organization lead our educational hikes and outings for adults and children, serve as land stewards for our public preserves and conservation easement properties, help with administrative and development activities, and host fundraising events to support the land trust. We applaud all their efforts on behalf of land conservation and land preservation.

LOCAL GIRL SCOUT RELEASES BEETLES TO ELIMINATE INVASIVE PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE AT HAMPTONBURGH PRESERVE



Caroline Savage, St. Lawrence Centre

As part of her Girl Scout Gold Award Project (equivalent to the Boy Scouts Eagle Scout Award) Lea Della Vecchia of Goshen released 2000 Golden Loosestrife Beetles at the land trust's Hamptonburgh Preserve last summer to control the growth of purple loosestrife, a non native plant that is destroying the natural ecosystem in wetlands throughout the northeast.

Purple Loosestrife is an invasive plant species brought over by the Dutch in the 1500's. It grows quickly and spreads rapidly, choking out the native vegetation that wetland animals such as ducks, muskrats, frogs and turtles need for survival. Through researching her project, Lea discovered that there are ways to biologically control the spread of purple loosestrife without causing harm to the environment. The release of the golden loosestrife beetle is a method approved by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The DEC provides the beetles for free for use on public lands. The beetles

and their larvae eat only the purple loosestrife, so do not pose a threat to native plants. After all the loosestrife is gone, the beetles either move on to another field of loosestrife or die off. Native plants are then able to make a full return.

After their release in July, Lea placed a tube in the ground at the release site so she could return to monitor the beetles' progress next year. She also took several pictures of the loosestrife in full bloom so she can compare one year to the next. She expects it will take several years before we see the natural vegetation coming back because of the extent of the loosestrife at the preserve.

Lea is now a freshman at the State University of New York School of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse University.

HIKER EXPRESSES GRATITUDE TO ORANGE COUNTY LAND TRUST

This fall, our Executive Director, Jim Delaune took Andres Rodriguez on a hike. Andres, who is blind, wrote Jim a letter to express his thanks and convey his experiences that beautiful fall day. Here, in his own words, are some of his thoughts on land preservation.



Dear Jim:

Since moving to the Hudson Valley in 1997, I have had nothing but a love and respect for the beauty that surrounds me and have longed to hike some of the more challenging terrain. There would actually be nothing unusual about me participating in this activity except for the fact that I am blind. I am sincerely grateful to you, Jim for taking me out on that beautiful fall day to experience the beauty of our natural world. As a blind hiker, the sounds and smells, and feel of different terrain were experienced with an intensity that is difficult to describe. The beauty of the land, sky and water filled my spirit and gave me a

new calmness I have not experienced in years. The mission of organizations like yours are to preserve these incredible acres so that we may enjoy the beauty the world has to offer now and for many generations to come. I left that day with a profound respect for the beautiful world we live in and an intense feeling of gratitude for those who maintain it.

Thank you again.

Andres Rodriguez

2006 FINANCIAL REPORT

As you can see in the following charts, it is the generosity of our individual supporters that provides the Orange County Land Trust with the funds to continue with our mission of preserving the natural and scenic beauty and working farmland that make Orange County uniquely beautiful. Almost half of our funding is from individual contributions from the community and over 15% in the form of grants from government and private agencies. A total of 60% of our income goes directly to the protection and preservation of land through acquisition, donation or placement of conservation easements.

Financial Overview

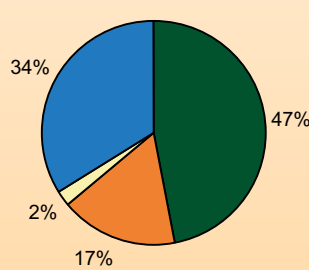
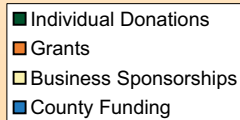
2006 Operating Income:
2006 Operating Expenses:

\$405, 760
\$428, 510

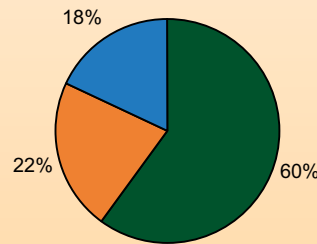
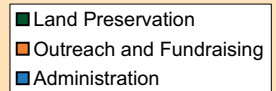
Total amount of land preserved to date:
Land in progress: (not yet closed)

Over 2,500 acres
1,025 acres

SOURCES OF FUNDS



USES OF FUNDS



Pictured above: (1) Volunteer John Yrizarry with Middletown YMCA kids at our 2007 Birdathon, (2) Canoeing on the Wallkill, (3) Winter scene on conservation easement property, (4) At the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum fundraiser in Newburgh, (5) Volunteers at Heritage Trail Cleanup, (6) OCLT offices at Mills House, (7) Moonbeams Kiosk: Made possible with a grant from O&R Utilities, (8) Slippery Salamander Hunt on Fuller Mt., Warwick



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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Orange County Land Trust is to preserve the fields, forests, wetlands, ridgelines and river corridors in and around Orange County through voluntary land conservation.

This Fall 2007 newsletter and 2006 Annual Report is sponsored by the Otisville Grange. The Grange, or Order of Patrons of Husbandry, still works to improve the quality of life in rural communities. It is often called the "Service Organization of the Countryside" for its support of community based organizations and programs and belief in building strong communities by working together. Many thanks for your support of the Orange County Land Trust!