



THE LAND STEWARD

Newsletter of the Finger Lakes Land Trust

Vol. 14, No. 4

working to protect the natural integrity of the Finger Lakes Region

Fall 2002

At The Sign Of The Lone Pine ~ Farewell to Gay Nicholson



It was with considerable humility that I agreed to make a guest appearance in this column, “At the Sign of the Lone Pine.” After all, the column has been written by Gay Nicholson ever since the *Land Steward’s* Spring, 1996 issue. But Gay, our executive director for nearly seven years, has resigned effective August 15, and—among many other aspects of her leadership—we will miss the information, insights, and inspiration that she has shared with us in her “Lone Pine” articles.

After years of service with the Land Trust, Gay felt that it was time for her to return to the environmental research and policy arena, an area of endeavor she found personally rewarding before we hired her in late 1995. At that time, she was employed in Cornell’s Program on Ethics and Public Life, where she researched such issues as global warming and the social psychology of environmental ethics. Surely Gay’s more recent experience of practicing environmental ethics “on the ground,” in the work of land protection, will add depth and a practical perspective when she returns to a more academic setting.

Before Gay moves on to that next phase of her career, however, it behooves us to reflect upon her accomplishments as our executive director, and to honor her vision, dedication, skills and plain hard work. We may take some measure of what her leadership has meant to us by looking at the astounding growth the Land Trust has experienced since November 1995:

- 12 new nature preserves;
- 14 additions to existing preserves;
- 15 new conservation easements;
- We had approximately 600 members in late 1995, compared to approximately 1,450 today—a 140% increase;
- We moved to a new, larger headquarters at 202 E. Court Street (Ithaca) in 1996—then in 2000, we purchased the building, expanded the office into the entire first floor, and renamed our headquarters The Leopold Center;



Photo by Bill Hecht

Gay Nicholson, Executive Director of the FLLT for the past 7 years.

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The Fraternal Order Of Snakebite

I used to think that these days, East Coast timber rattlesnakes only lived from Pennsylvania to points south. That was before I met Rulon Clark and the two other members of the Fraternal Order of Snakebite. In fact, rattlesnakes are thriving in Chemung County at our Steege Hill Preserve.

Rulon is a doctoral candidate at Cornell’s Neurobiology and Behavior program. He’s studying the threatened timber rattlesnake population at Steege Hill to better understand the foraging behavior of sedentary predators. Timber rattlesnakes are much slower than the small mammals and occasional bird that they prey on. How do they select the right spot for an ambush? Perhaps, more importantly, how do they recognize when a site is unproductive and move on?

Timber rattlesnakes have a remarkable sense of smell. That flickering fork of a tongue that you see isn’t a sign of aggression—the snake is busy transporting scent molecules, (including yours), to the “Jacobsons organ” on the roof of its mouth. In processing this data it can assess (for example) how recently, how frequently, and perhaps even how many of a prey species, say, deer mouse or meadow vole, have gone scurrying by.

Rulon has set transmitters into the body cavities of several rattlers. During the months that the snakes are in “hunt mode” before dening up in the fall, Rulon checks on them regularly. The remaining gentlemen of the Fraternal Order of Snakebite, Art Smith, steward for The Nature Conservancy’s nearby Frenchman’s Bluff preserve, and Bob Corneau, Steege Hill’s steward, often tag along. If he observes a snake in an ambush posture, Rulon carefully sets up a motion-activated camera. He wants to see how the snake responds to approaching prey (or the lack thereof). By understanding how long—and under what circumstances—these sedentary predators will wait for their prey, he hopes to develop mathematical models of the foraging behavior, not only of snakes, but of other ambush predators such as spiders.



Photo by Rich Sheiman

Rulon Clark and “Cindy” one of the rattlesnakes he’s studying at Steege Hill.

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At The Sign Of The Lone Pine

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- We established an office in Canandaigua for the Western Lakes Chapter and hired a half-time staff person to support the work of that chapter;
- Since 1996, volunteers and staff have produced a number of highly successful Watershed Talks & Treks series in seven of our regional watersheds;
- We completed our first major fund raising campaign to pay for the land purchase for the Biodiversity Preserve;
- We also completed two “special needs” fund raising efforts to support additional staff and for the purchase of the Leopold Center.

Gay would be the first to give credit to Land Trust staff and to the many dedicated volunteers whose collective hard work achieved all of the above-listed accomplishments. But Gay was

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intimately involved with much of this work, and her vision, initiative, and management played a role in all of it.

Gay’s talent as a negotiator has been of particular value for the Land Trust. Perhaps the most amazing demonstration of her negotiating skill was the purchase of the Steege Hill property in Chemung County, now our largest nature preserve (almost 800 acres). The effort to acquire this property was particularly difficult, in that its ownership was divided among several absentee owners, one group of which was about to begin negotiating with a gas-drilling company at the point when we finally made contact with them!

In another area, fund raising, Gay learned and honed her skills on the job. She quickly understood that good fund raising is really about building strong, close relationships between our organization and those who care about it. Her genuine interest in people and her ability to listen to what is important to them have been the keys to her success both as a negotiator and a fundraiser.

An important feature of Gay’s leadership has been her close involvement with the larger land trust movement, in particular with the Land Trust Alliance and its Northeast program office. As a member of the advisory council of LTA-

NY, Gay has worked hard in Albany to encourage the legislature to pass the Private Lands Conservation Incentive Program (PLCIP), which would provide tax incentives for land protection efforts and funding for building the capacity of local land trusts.

Two aspects of the Land Trust’s growth were of particular concern for Gay: our financial health and our development into a truly regional organization. Gay’s efforts to bring Land Trust services to areas outside of Tompkins County have been legion, from spearheading the Skaneateles Watershed Project to providing strong financial and staff support to the dedicated volunteers of our Western Lakes Chapter.

In the financial arena, Gay has been a hands-on manager,

maintaining a detailed knowledge of our fund balances and transfers. She is keenly aware that if the Land Trust intends to be the steward, in perpetuity, of all the acres under our protection, then it simply must maintain fiscal discipline. While we would all agree with this message in the abstract, it is not so easy to hear when it affects a favorite project. But we have Gay to thank for reminding us that good stewardship at the Land Trust begins with fiscal responsibility.

Yes, Gay has been a true and devoted leader for more than half of the Land Trust’s existence, as we have not only grown but also matured as an organization. Beyond finances, fund raising, and lands preserved, however, there is something else that Gay has given us. I know I am not alone when I say that Gay has inspired us to discover within ourselves a deeper level of meaning in our environmental work.

For Gay, “environmental ethics” is not merely a catch phrase; its practical implications spring from a deeply personal, spiritual source. One of her “Sign of the Lone Pine” columns had as its theme the insight that “we are truly co-creators with spirit on this planet of ours.” While this knowledge had come to her as “one of those sudden epiphanies,” Gay later found the same ideas in the writing of futurist Barbara Marx Hubbard. In an article on social and technological change, Hubbard proposed that we are now entering the age of conscious evolution, and urged citizens to “be the change we wish to see in the world.”

As I read the column, I was intrigued and inspired by Gay’s own exploration of this theme: “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.” But “the role of co-creator means we are on center stage, not off in the wings as minor characters of limited importance and responsibility.” And we may “find new power in the idea that we each wield the sculpting knife of a creator.”

Finally, referring to our personal role in protecting special places, Gay wrote, “This has me wondering what the conserva-

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tion 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?”

It’s a challenging question! And particularly so now, as we begin the search for a new executive director who will help us grow as a conservation leader in the Finger Lakes. To Gay Nicholson, who has admirably handled this role for seven years, we say, “Thank you for your good stewardship of the Finger Lakes Land Trust.”

—Joel Rabinowitz

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: BOB CORNEAU

Rattlesnakes, Porcupines, and Hikers

What does it take to steward almost 800 acres of wooded land? “Hard work!” laughs Bob Corneau, steward of the Steege Hill Preserve in the southern rivers region of the Finger Lakes.

Steege Hill is a great green bulwark rising straight above a sharp, north- and east-facing bend in the Chemung River. Bob took up his post on that bulwark—the Land Trust’s largest preserve—last March, working up to 32 hours a week for five weeks to ready the tract for its dedication in May.

“He’s an extraordinary steward,” says Betsy Darlington. “He’s cleared trails and blazed them, removed *tons* of trash, and built a sturdy kiosk.” Add to that, clearing brush after every storm, mowing trails regularly, single-handedly removing hundreds of trees that had blown down over the old logging roads that traverse the land, and getting rid of a mass of rubbish that had collected around one of the preserve’s ponds.

Steege Hill Preserve (that’s *Steggy*, mind; not *Steej!*) is in effect a magnificent extension of Bob and Hope Corneau’s own backyard. They have lived on adjacent land for the past 37 years of their 40-year marriage. Bob, retired from his position as a mason with Corning, Inc., has hiked the area since he was 16. An “old deer hunter and fisherman,” as he puts it, he has long been active in environmental work as a member of Ducks Unlimited and Trout Unlimited for which he helps stock fishing streams. He was also involved in efforts to restore New York State’s wild turkey and

snowshoe hare populations, helping to trap and transfer the creatures from Pennsylvania to here. The turkeys are happily proliferating, but the hares failed to survive. Bob doesn’t hunt in the preserve, of course; that’s prohibited. Instead, he’s removed all the hunting stands, and he’s the foremost patroller during the hunting season.

Photo by Betsy Darlington



Bob Corneau with kiosk and display box he built at Steege Hill Nature Preserve.

His interests have recently extended to rattlesnake research. Steege Hill is home to a number of timber rattlesnakes, a species that is threatened and protected. Cornell graduate student Rulon Clark has attached tiny radio transmitters to four of the sinuous local inhabitants. Every other day, Bob and Rulon walk the preserve, tracking and recording the whereabouts and movements of these timid snakes. “They play hide-and-see,” Bob says. “We walk for about three hours, but there have been times when we’ve been out in the field for up to 7 hours.”

“Bob Corneau really loves that preserve,” says Tom Reimers, the Land Trust’s vice president for land conservation. “And he loves all the creatures in it—bears and rattlesnakes, grouse and turkeys, porcupines and hikers. He’s even put a trail register box in the kiosk for hikers to record their thoughts.”

He may love those rattlesnakes, but he admits that several times, when he almost stepped on one of them, his hair stood on end. “It’s a challenging job,” he declares happily, “and an enjoyable one, too.”

—Caissa Wilmer

Birthdays

For generous contributions in celebration of the birthdays of:

Mr. Howard Nelson & Ms. Laura Buffam

From
Judith S. Rowlands



Rose S. Zabel

From
Eva Hoffmann

Need the Perfect Gift?

Our note cards, featuring the Stevenson and Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserves make a great gift, as do our comfy, woody-green, hand-embroidered baseball caps

Please contact Abbey in the Land Trust office at 607-275-9487 for details.

Planned Giving – *What It Is and How It Works*

The term “Planned Giving” describes gifts to nonprofit organizations, such as the Finger Lakes Land Trust, that are put in place by individuals now or at a later time and can include cash, securities, real estate or personal property, insurance, or annuities. Planned gifts can be one-time contributions or ongoing legacies as defined in a donor’s will and take into account the donor’s philanthropic objectives as well as the tax and estate planning implications. Planned giving can be in the form of an outright one-time gift of cash or appreciated property, or it may be in the form of a deferred gift. Following are examples of the most common types of planned gifts:

CHARITABLE BEQUEST

A bequest in your will may specify a certain sum of money, appreciated assets, or residue portions of your estate. You may specify whether your bequest shall be used for a direct fund (\$5,000 minimum donation), be added to an existing fund donated by the family at an earlier date, or be directed into the

Finger Lakes Land Trust’s general fund. Because a bequest is revocable, a tax refund will be available to the estate after the will has been executed.

CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST

Under this arrangement you irrevocably transfer property—cash, securities or appreciated property—to a trustee, which may be the charity or a trust company that is managing the trust fund. The right to the income from the trust, either for life or a specified period of time, remains with you. You agree to donate the residual capital to the organization at the end of the specified period of time. This type of deferred donation has the advantage of supplying you with a reliable income without the responsibility of fund management, income tax advantages and the elimination of the possibility of a contested will.

For more information on planned giving options, please contact the Land Trust at 607 275-9487 or e-mail us at info@fllt.org

The Fraternal Order Of Snakebite

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I wonder, could this model tell how long a deer hunter will hang out on a tree stand?

The first rattler that we came upon was George. He was barely visible through a crack in the dead tree where he lay. Rulon gathered up the camera equipment that he had camouflaged there on a prior visit. Studying the footage will help him learn how these snakes hunt for food. With a little luck, this particular clip will reveal George snaring a chipmunk and slithering into the log to digest his mid summer’s meal.

Next we tracked down Ira Hayes. As we walked, I was transported back to memories of listening to the Ballad of Ira Hayes, from one of my favorite Bob Dylan albums. The memories vanished immediately when I crouched up to this massive black male. What a sight! Fifty-two inches long and fat, he weighs nearly five pounds.

Rulon bypasses pregnant females. After all, once they’re pregnant they don’t eat for nearly a year. They spend the spring and summer basking in the sun, making the yolk for five to ten embryos. By the time the babies are born and mom watches over them until they shed their first skin, she may have lost half her body weight. We watched pregnant Cindy bask on a fallen tree. Rulon speculates that there may be other snakes in this tree, as timber rattlesnakes tend to congregate.

In addition to Rulon’s primary research objectives, he is able to offer the Finger Lakes Land Trust valuable guidance for the land management plan of this new preserve. By knowing where the snakes den up and what their preferred foraging spots are, we can make sure the Steege Hill trail system provides them, and us, some healthy distance. In fact, I earned some praise from the Fraternal Order of Snakebite by suggesting that they remove a snake marker ribbon that was visible from the trail. While timber rattlesnakes are remarkably reluctant to strike (they are the snake of choice among snake handling religious sects), they’re vulnera-



Photo by Rich Sheiman

The Fraternal Order of Snakebite – the rattlesnake research team. Pictured from the left are: Rulon Clark, Bob Corneau and Art Smith.

ble to the sort that go around thwacking them with sticks or severing their tails. It’s best not to advertise their whereabouts.

The work that the Finger Lakes Land Trust is doing at Steege Hill is important to the preservation of this threatened species. Timber rattlesnakes were once abundant, by some accounts as far north as Maine. But habitat loss, bounty programs, trinket hunters, and den dynamiters have rendered timber rattlesnakes extremely rare in New York State. The fact that pregnant females are docile and bask exposed, often in groups, make the timber rattlesnake especially vulnerable to exploitation. In a recent study, 85 percent of the timber rattlesnakes observed at 13 sites were pregnant. One snake poacher claims to have captured 9,000 timber rattlesnakes in New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts over a 45-year period. Without conservation programs like ours at Steege Hill, timber rattlesnakes would become a thing of lore.

—Rich Sheiman

Making the Natural Connection ~ from the Land Trust Alliance

Consider: A study of post-surgical cancer patients found that those who became involved in nature-based activities—like walking and gardening—experienced faster improvement in their ability to concentrate and showed significantly greater gains on “quality of life” ratings.

Consider: Adolescents who have psychological problems are frequently referred to group wilderness therapy and find healing in the presence of nature.

Consider: A recent study of nursing homes found a 60 percent decrease in behavioral incidents when frail residents were allowed to get into nature by doing some gardening.

What we guessed intuitively—that connecting with nature changes our lives and our attitudes—is now being proven by scientific research. There’s just one problem: **Each day in America, we lose more than 8 square miles of natural lands. At that rate, we are losing 2 million acres of wilderness, farms and natural areas each year.** And, in the process, we are also losing our best chance to find some peace in our busy lives.

Many people assume that sprawl is inevitable and that nothing can be done about it. But the million people who are active in America’s 1,263 nonprofit local land trusts are doing plenty. They have already permanently protected more than 6.2 million acres—an area about twice the size of Connecticut—of parks, trails, farms, and natural areas. The results are obvious in communities across the country:

- Bob Torstenson believed that every American should have a chance to see wild and unbroken landscapes. To make that possible for all time, he left his 135,129-acre Double H Ranch, near Albuquerque, NM, to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, which plans to bring young people to the ranch to experience nature.
- A conservation easement donated to River Fields (KY) preserved a 591-acre family farm bordering the Ohio River in one of the fastest-growing suburban areas near Louisville. The prop-

erty’s rolling woodlands and half-mile river frontage will remain essentially unchanged, and the popular Henry’s Ark petting zoo will continue to welcome visitors.

- The Wood River Land Trust (ID) is leading a three-year restoration of Elkhorn Creek, adjacent to a popular bike and cross-country ski path in Sun Valley. Beavers have already built dams in the revitalized streambed, and fish began moving up the stream even as their habitat was still under construction.

Since 1989, the Finger Lakes Land Trust has protected 6,417 acres of land across central New York by establishing 23 nature preserves, including the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve, the world’s first temperate zone preserve for research in chemical ecology and bioprospecting, and securing 38 conservation easements throughout this 11-lake region.

What can you do? **Support your local land trust—with your energy, your enthusiasm, and your dreams.** Don’t wait until that last spot of serenity becomes the latest strip mall.

—Rand Wentworth, president
Land Trust Alliance

Founded in 1982, the Land Trust Alliance is the national leader of private land conservation movement, promoting voluntary land conservation across the country and providing resources, leadership and training to the nation’s 1,200-plus nonprofit grassroots land trusts, helping them to protect important open spaces.

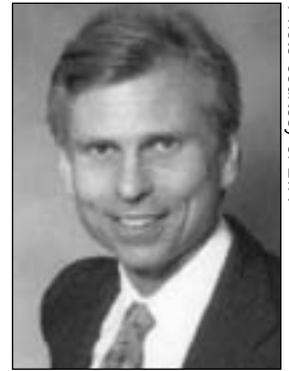


Photo courtesy of LTA

Rand Wentworth is the new president of the Land Trust Alliance.

On behalf of the board, staff, volunteers, and members of the Finger Lakes Land Trust (and let’s include all of the residents of our region), I’d like to extend to Gay Nicholson, our departing executive director, our sincere and deepest thanks for her tireless commitment to the protection and long-range stewardship of land in our beautiful Finger Lakes landscape.

Gay demonstrated tenacity fueled by her long range vision, and employed the shrewd negotiating skills necessary to broker complex agreements and contend with quite an array of personalities and agendas, as she led the Land Trust from a startup organization with big dreams into the dynamic and regional land trust it is today.

Thank you, Gay, for your hard work, personal sacrifice, and loving determination expressed in your tenure. Generations to come will appreciate the fruits of your successes.

—John Rogers, President,
FLLT Board of Directors

I was saddened to hear that our Executive Director Gay Nicholson will be leaving. Gay has been a remarkable example of leadership and vision for us all. Such talents only come along rarely in a lifetime and the Finger Lakes Land Trust has been blessed by her sunny personality and talents for many years. To replace her will be a difficult task.

Integrity, leadership, guidance, and, most of all, caring are very elusive qualities to replace. They were all in abundance in Gay. We have all been blessed by her and I treasure all that I have learned from her and the privilege of working with her to further the goals of the Land Trust.

I wish her the very best in whatever she attempts and thank her for the many hours of care she brought to the Land Trust and all the individuals she touched. We could not have gotten a better person for the job. How very lucky we have been to have her as our representative. She has been a fine example for us all to live up to.

—Bill Hecht
Past FLLT board member

Who We Are...

The Finger Lakes Land Trust is a membership-supported, nonprofit land conservation organization founded in 1989. The Land Trust works to protect the cherished natural places of the 12-county Finger Lakes Region. We conserve the beautiful, wild, and working landscapes of this area by establishing nature preserves and holding conservation easements, educating for responsible stewardship, and collaborating with organizations, communities, and individuals.

By protecting the region's 6,000 square miles of forests, farms, and open spaces, the Finger Lakes Land Trust provides many benefits to the communities we work with: clean air and water, plant and animal diversity, scenic views, and opportunities to learn about and enjoy the natural world.

How We Protect the Land...

The Finger Lakes Land Trust helps landowners to take direct and positive action through private, voluntary land conservation. Our members have made it possible for the Land Trust to protect a mosaic of natural habitats and landscapes among the long, lovely lakes, rolling hills, rich farmland, rugged gorges, vibrant wetlands, and mature forest that we call home.

Here are just a few of our recent projects that were made possible with our members' support:

- **Steege Hill Nature Preserve**, an 800-acre preserve of the forested hillsides and rare species habitat along the Chemung River (Chemung County)
- **McIlroy Bird Sanctuary**, a 128-acre preserve that protects critical bird and plant habitat in the Cayuga Lake Watershed (Cayuga County)
- **Nundawao**, the 226-acre Great Hill Nature Preserve, a massive hillside on the east side of Canandaigua Lake (Yates County)

For information about other Nature Preserves please go to www.fllt.org

FINGER LAKES



Photo by Betsy Darlington

TADPOLE TRIP

Marty Borko, Carol Schmitt and Jackie Grant, looking at tadpoles and dragonfly nymphs at the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve.



Photo by Betsy Darlington

CORNELL UNIVERSITY FRESHMEN

As part of their POST – Pre-Orientation Service Trip, freshmen from Cornell spend an August morning building a bridge at the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve

Working to protect the natural integrity of the Finger Lakes Region.



Photo by Betsy Darlington

SNAKE FIND

Jackie Grant with a beautiful Brown Snake found on the nature walk she led at the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve.

LAND TRUST



Left:
LEARNING WEB KIDS
Young people from the Learning Web getting ready to work on clearing an overgrown trail at the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve

Below:
HONEOYE LAKE
Finger Lakes Community College conservation professor, Bruce Gilman, leads a canoe trip down the Honeoye Lake inlet.



How You Can Help...

In order to protect more land we need your participation through membership, annual appeal donations, and contributions of time and energy.

Become a member if you haven't joined yet and team up with hundreds of your friends and neighbors as we work together to protect the Finger Lakes.

As a member of the Finger Lakes Land Trust, you'll have the satisfaction of knowing that your membership support will result in protection of cherished places throughout the Finger Lakes Region. In addition, members also receive:

- A complimentary subscription to our newsletter, *The Land Steward*, published four times a year. *The Land Steward* is a fantastic source for up-to-date information about our latest land protection projects, stimulating discussions of conservation issues, announcements of hikes and events, and information for landowners in the Finger Lakes Region.
- Invitations to our events, such as hikes, concerts, lake cruises, book readings, and our Annual Celebration.
- Membership benefits and discounts at many local businesses that also support the mission of the Finger Lakes Land Trust.

Volunteer with us! Over 200 volunteers help us each year with everything from trail work to office work.

Together we can leave a natural legacy and shape what our Finger Lakes landscapes will look like tomorrow and for generations to come

"Land Trusts give people the power to shape the future of their neighborhoods, and to ensure for future generations the existence of the wild and scenic places, the farms and forests, the rolling hills and quiet places that make our lives meaningful."

REFLECTIONS ON CONSERVATION

In Trust: Ethics for Ecology and Justice

“Keeping,” justice, and community. Sustainability, sufficiency, participation, and solidarity. Three ancient principles and four modern norms. What have they to do with us, the Finger Lakes Land Trust?

The ancient command to “keep” the earth, to be a trustee of the earth, to preserve and cherish the earth, translates into sustainability. This means the capacity of social systems and natural systems to thrive together—indefinitely. But as nations gather in South Africa for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the hard question is whether development to meet real needs can sustain the integrity of the natural systems upon which it depends. Humans may not be wise or farsighted enough to ensure their own well-being and survival. Could this be a failure of appreciation and thanksgiving for the exquisite intricacy of conditions, interactions, and interdependencies that make life possible and good?

The ancient imperative of justice

translates into two norms for our time: sufficiency and participation. Sufficiency means having enough of the creation’s good things for a reasonably secure, fulfilling life. The monumental challenge to our consumption-obsessed society is to discern what really constitutes *enough*. However we define it, most of the world’s people need more to have enough. Many others have much more than enough. Yet the norm applies to all without exception. How else will sufficiency be sustainable for all?

Participation means that we all take part in the economy of sufficiency. We all participate in the life of the community, in its arrangements for drawing sustenance from nature. We all engage, as able and gifted, in needful work, the enjoyment of a sufficient livelihood, and in truly participatory self-governance.

The ancient call to community—to the formation and nurture of communities that care, that cooperate—translates into a fourth norm, solidarity. Solidarity actually underlies and undergirds these other

norms. It means standing together to serve the future. It means the essential oneness of the human family and its integral relationship with all creation. It means universalizing the love of neighbor and extending that to other creatures.

Yes, these norms sound utterly utopian. They are not the operative way of our civilization and culture. Yet they are inescapable. The future depends upon their realization, however imperfect.

The crisis of our time stems from a betrayal of trust. Humans have failed, to a perilous extent, to respect nature as theirs to use and enjoy *only in trust*. So let us begin living by these norms in the many ways open to us. Let us love the land. Let us embrace both the costs and the joys of our trusteeship.

—William E. Gibson

William E. Gibson is Director Emeritus, Eco-Justice Project, Center for Religion, Ethics, and Social Policy, Cornell University.

Wish List

Folding Card Tables
Good Lopping Shears
Step Ladder

Membership

You can now donate, join or renew your membership on line through our web page at

www.flit.org

It’s fast, easy and secure.
Thank you for your support!

Marriages

For generous contributions in celebration of the marriages of:

Graham Kerslick and Jennifer Wilkins

From

Tracy J. Farrell and Ronald F. Chapman

Margaret and Robert Harris

Christina Stark & David Weinstein

Saoirse McClory & Larry Hirschberger

Janet McCue and Robert Kibbee

Kathleen Rasmussen and Brian Chabot

Judith Simmons and Arthur Magun

Jeff Sobal

Elizabeth Tuckermanty

Claudia Kellersch and Blair Brumley

From

Mary Ellen Collinge, Peter Collinge & Carol Thiel

Elissa Wolfson and Stephen Kress

From

Betsy and Ron Fuller

Western Lakes Chapter Hits *Mach Speed*

The members and volunteers of the Western Lakes Chapter (WLC) worked overtime this summer. Preserve signs were erected at Great Hill and the Wesley Hill "Anna Brown Tract" Preserves, and the office at 90 S. Main St, in Canandaigua was christened with a new sign as well. More than twenty "Talks & Treks" events were held with hundreds in attendance. Our staff person Liz Brown directed the launching of the Nature's Gift Campaign, which will support the land protection efforts in the WLC region. We are very busy with EIGHT land protection projects in various stages of investigation and development.

Why the frenzy? The residential development pressure on our shorelines and hills is greater than ever. Tomorrow is simply too late to act to protect forever some of our natural treasures. Help us today by calling our office at 585-394-4189 and ask what you can do to support our local land protection projects. Don't wait until tomorrow...we can't.



Photo by Jim Kersting

Western Lakes chapter volunteer Steve Carter erected the sign, marking the Anna V. Brown Tract of the Wesley Hill Nature Preserve.



Photo by Jim Kersting

Western Lakes volunteer Mike Cartwright puts the finishing touches on the new office sign at 90 South Main Street in Canandaigua. The sign was painted by Nannie Nehring-Bliss.

In Memory of

Our deepest thanks for generous contributions

Robert F. Bishop

From

Mary B. Nichols & the Hector RSVP Bone Builders Group

Barbara Booker

From

Marvin and Susan Adleman

Betsy and Dick Darlington

Tob and Joan deBoer

Nanette and Jack Blakely

John and Agnes Blakely

Trudie and Adolph Kazlauskas

Finger Lakes Runners Club

David H. Hinchcliff

From

John, Robin, Emily, Kate and Abby Hinchcliff

Ruth E. Higgins

From

Joan and Jack Bartlett

Donald E. Higgins

Malcolm and Drury MacKenzie

Acorn *Designs*

Steve Sierigk displays his wares at the Ithaca Farmers' Market.

Bookmarks and journals, note cards and pads, stationery, T-shirts, and tote bags: all are part of a product line which Steve Sierigk at Acorn Designs has been developing for twenty years. But Acorn Designs is about much more than merchandise. It's about ecologically sensitive choices in papers and inks. And it's about the power of business to make positive change. "Our early choices defined us as an environmental company," Steve says.

Acorn Designs has remained a small business since the early 1980s, with three employees and as much direct marketing as possible. With ten area artists and several local writers contributing to items found in over 1,000 stores across the country, Acorn's impact goes far —taking the Land Trust with it. You can find Susan Bull Riley's paintings of our Stevenson Preserve (*Silence*) and Biodiversity Preserve (*Wild Places*) in the Acorn Designs gallery.

Steve served on the Land Trust board in the late 1990s and helped put together the Business Partner program through the membership committee. "We thought that business partners would act as a positive feedback loop, working with the Land Trust to bring employees into the fold," he says. "New members would become volunteers, serving on committees or the board." He should know. This has been his own experience.

Next year could be the best yet for Acorn Designs. Seventy new products are gracing a line you can find anywhere from Sequoia National Park to the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. Find out more by visiting www.acorndesigns.org. Remember, Land Trust members receive a 10% discount.

Becoming a Land Trust Business Partner was a natural for Steve Sierigk and Acorn Designs. It's all part of the power of example. "I can't imagine doing something I didn't believe in," says Steve.

—Pam Goddard



Photo by Betsy Darlington

A CLOSER LOOK

The Natural History of BATS

Bats. Do you notice those wavering, blurry shadows when you're out at dusk in a woody spot? Look up—even in autumn bats are still out and about, catching the last of the season's insects. But by Halloween, they'll be hibernating for the winter.

Bats are amazing. Consider the stats: with over 1,000 species worldwide, bats comprise nearly one quarter of all mammals. Only the rodents have more species. Bats are found in all climates except the most extreme desert and polar regions. But it's their ability to fly that sets bats apart from all other mammals. (Flying squirrels actually glide).

The United States and Canada are home to approximately 40 species of bats. Most of these are voracious insect feeders—certainly, the nine species found in our area are. Of these, only two—the little brown and big brown bats—are easy to find, sometimes forming colonies that roost in barns and attics. And it's the little brown bat you'll see most often.

Smaller than a mouse, this bat's business is bugs. Indeed, just one little brown bat can catch upward of 1,200 small insects in an hour's time. Mosquitoes beware! And while we're looking at 4-digit numbers, a bat's heart beats 1,000 times a minute while it's on the job. That's also about as often as it makes rapid-fire ultrasonic sound pulses that echo off trees, buildings, fence posts—and insects—to reveal their whereabouts.

This is called echolocation. It's nature's radar, and bats developed it long before humans were on the scene. Echolocation guides bats as they zig and zag about after insects. The bats catch the smaller ones in their mouths, but need a bit of help with larger insects. So they form their tail membrane into a scoop, bringing the membrane forward with their hind legs to help push the insects into their mouths. This is done so quickly you wouldn't even notice these acrobatics going on above your head.

If they do it all with echoes, then, are bats blind? Not at all. "Blind as a bat" is a misconception, nothing more.



Photo Source: Merlin Tuttle's America's Neighborhood Bats

Eptesicus or Big Brown Bat is most common in New York State.

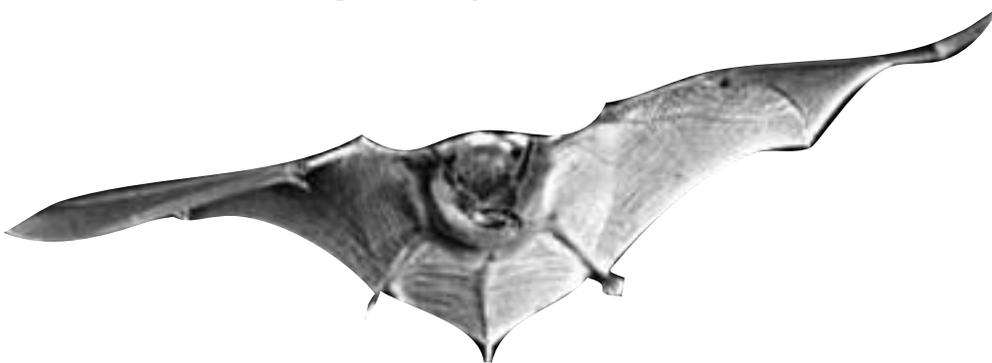
The bat colonies you find in attics and outbuildings, or in rock crevices and tree hollows, are generally composed of females and young. (Males tend to roost elsewhere, alone: behind a shutter or under a flap of bark on a tree.) Females bear one or two pups a year, born in late May or early June. They begin flying with their moms sometime in late June or July, only 3 weeks after they are born, but don't leave the roost until mid-August. These bats have a strong homing instinct, so if you attempt to exclude them from your attic, wait till the young are flying free, and provide them with bat houses nearby.

As Halloween draws nigh, bats prepare to hibernate. Most migrate south to caves in Pennsylvania or Maryland. Others stay in New York, also seeking out caves and deep rock crevices. Their body temperature drops about 50 percent; their heart rate slows down to 20 beats per minute—barely two percent of their in-flight mode. Now and then you'll even see a big brown bat hibernating alone under eaves or shutters.

Look for bats to return to your evening skies in late April or May with a healthy appetite for insects.

For more information read Merlin Tuttle's America's Neighborhood Bats or look up www.batcon.org on the Internet.

—Kim Grant and
Mary M. Woodsen



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FALL 2002 CALENDAR:

FALL "FIRST SUNDAY" HIKES, led by naturalist **Bob Guthrie**:

- ➔ **OCT 6, Sun., 1:00 PM:** GREAT HILL PRESERVE. From Rt. 5&20, east of Canandaigua Lake, turn left on Rt. 364 South. Continue on Rt. 364 to Middlesex. At the town center, turn right on Rt. 245 South. Continue 4.8 miles and turn right on Sunnyside Rd. Go over the West River for 0.4 miles and bear left at fork in the road. Go 0.4 miles to the next fork and bear right onto South Hill Rd. Go 0.7 miles up the hill to the entrance to the Great Hill Preserve, on left side of road. *Call 586-394-4189 for more information.*
- ➔ **NOV. 3, Sun., 1:00 PM:** WESLEY HILL PRESERVE. From Canandaigua, go west on Rt. 5 & 20, then south on Rt. 20A & Rt. 64, then stay on Rt. 20A going west. Just before the Village of Honeoye, go south on E. Lake Rd., then take a left on Pine Hill Rd. and then a right, following signs to the Cumming Nature Center. This road becomes Gulick Rd. Park in parking area on right, shortly after passing Wesley Hill Rd. *Call 586-394-4189 for more information.*

Oct. 19, Sat., 10 AM: FOREST AND FEN FUN: Nature walk through the unusual wetlands of the McIlroy Bird Sanctuary in Summerhill, led by Matt Young and Betsy Darlington. From Lansing, go east on Rt. 34A, then north (left) on Salt Rd. about 6 miles, to Rt. 90, then east (right) about 2 miles to Lake Como Rd., then north (left) about 2 miles to the DEC fishing access parking area, on the right, where we'll meet. (The preserve is less than a stone's throw NW of that.) From Skaneateles, go south on Route 41A. Turn right on Branch Rd., left on Lake Como Rd. Park in DEC parking lot, as above. Wear wetable footwear!

Sun., Nov. 17, 1 PM: YEAR-END NATURE WALK at Steege Hill Nature Preserve in Big Flats. From Rt. 17, take exit 49. Turn south from the exit ramp and follow signs to Olcott Rd. At T intersection, turn right on Rt. 64 (unmarked), and right again on Rt. 352. Turn left on S. Corning Rd., cross the river, and turn left on Steege Hill Rd. Go about 1 mile to the gate, on the left, just before the pipeline cut. Park on shoulder of road on the right, *off* the pavement.

Wed., Dec. 18, 4-7 PM: HOLIDAY PARTY at The Clinton House, 116 N. Cayuga Street, Ithaca. RSVP by Dec. 11, 607-275-9487.

Sat., Feb. 8, 10 AM: SNOWSHOE or CROSS-COUNTRY SKI AT STEEGE HILL. Led by Linda Buttell and Betsy Darlington. See directions, above. *Trip cancelled if not enough snow.*

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.