



PECONIC LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER

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Photo: Jeff Heatley

“Winds Way,” Jamesport

Late in 2001, Richard Wines and Nancy Gilbert donated a conservation easement on 3 contiguous parcels totaling 15.2 acres in Jamesport. This easement protects approximately 9.9 acres of agricultural land currently planted in hay and 1.7 acres of scenic woodland and wetland, with beachfront on Great Peconic Bay. Also protected by the easement are the facades of the historic buildings located within the 3.2-acre development area, including the Greek-Revival Wilbur-Fanning house, a mid-19th century one-room schoolhouse, the Corwin-Hallock barn and a small shed that may pre-date the house. The site is unique—first,

as you will note from Richard Wine’s following history, the land has been in his family for more than 300 years, and secondly, the buildings have each been moved to the Wines/Gilbert land from other locations on the North Fork. As Richard Wines and Nancy Gilbert describe what continues to be a labor of love as well as a rewarding personal journey, “We are committed to doing our small part to preserve our magnificent heritage here on the North Fork. By making this donation to the Peconic Land Trust, we are assuring the protection of the entire parcel from further development and the structures from being inappropriately altered or

destroyed.” Distressed by the rapid pace of destruction of Riverhead’s farmland, historic homes and natural habitats, Richard Wines and Nancy Gilbert epitomize the definition of “steward.” They have personally invested in the protection of endangered buildings and have ensured that “Winds Way” will be respected for generations to come. Their efforts provide an excellent model for others to follow and, indeed, that is their intention. Richard Wines and Nancy Gilbert comment, “We hope that you will join us in protecting the treasures we have here on the North Fork by supporting our local farmers by patronizing their farmstands and local officials who are committed to preserving our heritage.” Recently, among family papers, Richard Wines found a plat map that his grandfather had prepared, most likely in the 1940s, for a property subdivision that included 108 lots and was to be called “Jamesport Park” . . . fortunately, a dream that will never be realized.

A History

Our property is the southeast corner of the four allotments granted to John Budd by the Town of Southold in the First Aquebogue Dividend of 1661. John Budd was one of the wealthiest of the original band of Puritans who had settled Southold in the 1640s. He gave his first house to one of his daughters who moved it to Cutchogue where it is now known as the “Old House” and serves as the centerpiece to the Cutchogue Village Green museum complex. Budd’s four Aquebogue allotments stretched westward almost to Simmons Point and extended north all the way to Long Island Sound—well over 1,000 acres altogether.

John Budd left his Aquebogue allotments to another daughter, Mary, who married Christopher Youngs, son of John Youngs, the first minister and leader of the Southold settlement. Neither John Budd nor his daughter and son-in-law ever lived on this land, but two of John and Mary’s sons, Christopher and John, did settle on this property around 1700, where they were among the first inhabitants in what is now Riverhead Town. Almost a century-and-a-half later, Christopher’s great-grandson, Edward Youngs (my great-great grandfather)

inherited land in the southeast corner of the old Budd-Youngs property and gradually bought back additional adjacent parcels of the original allotment as his improving fortunes allowed.

Edward Youngs built a house about 1840 on the property. This house, which is shown in the *Riverhead Bicentennial Album*, was the first house on what is now Peconic Bay Boulevard. Indeed, the path originally known as the “road to Edward Young’s House” became a segment of Peconic Bay Boulevard when the present road was laid out in the 1920s. His house, which burned down early in the 20th century, stood just to the west of our west hedgerow. Edward’s farm stretched north to the railroad tracks (where a commercial nursery now operates) and also includes all of the land along Lockett Drive, about 100 acres altogether.

The land passed through one of Edward’s daughters into the Wines family early in the 20th century. Edward left about 15 acres in the southeast corner of his farm to two of his daughters, one of whom had married my great-grandfather, Henry Wines, a New York businessman whose father also came from an old North

Fork family. The couple apparently met at the Methodist Camp Meeting held regularly about a quarter mile to the east in Jamesport. My grandfather, Lester Wines, inherited his mother’s interest in the property and bought out his aunts. He built a small seasonal cottage on the waterfront edge of the property in 1928. My mother’s family had built a cottage next door about 6 years earlier on a parcel acquired from my father’s family, and my parents met as children across the fence between the two cottages.

Although my grandfather did not farm the property, he spent a great deal of time caring for it, keeping the woodland carefully groomed, planting trees and raising bees. When my grandfather died, the property passed to two uncles and my mother. Nancy and I have gradually acquired parts of the property from the uncles and inherited my mother’s share, except for a parcel she gave to my brother, Roger. The name “Wind’s Way” is based on a 17th century variant of the Wines family name found in the Town of Southold records.

Richard Wines



Photo: Jeff Heatley



Photo: Jeff Heatley

◀ The District #10 schoolhouse originally stood on Sound Avenue near the corner of Northville Turnpike. Built in 1872, it was modernized and enlarged in 1888 and closed in 1911 as part of a state effort to consolidate one-room schools into larger districts. Afterwards, the building served as housing for workers on my great-grandfather Wells' farm and, still later, as hay storage. The exterior looks very much as it did in 1888, except that the bell tower added that year is long gone. Almost all of the original interior detail also survives. The building was moved to its present site in 1992.

The Corwin-Hallock Barn originally stood at the corner of Sound and Pier Avenues in Northville. Although altered over the years, the three-bay structure still has almost all of its original hand-hewn oak timbers. ▼



Photo: Nancy Gilbert and Richard Wines



Photo: Nancy Gilbert and Richard Wines

▲ The Wilbur-Fanning House originally stood on the Main Road in Laurel, just to the west of the post office. The oldest part probably dates to the last decade of the 18th century or the first decade of the 19th. Threatened by demolition, it was moved to "Winds Way" in 1995 and has been restored as closely as possible to its Greek Revival appearance in the 1830s.

Protected by the easement is wildlife habitat along approximately 229 feet of beach front on Great Peconic Bay. ▶

◀ East Hedgerow – this hedgerow is an historic "eleven o'clock line" that dates to 1661 when it marked the eastern boundary of the four allotments granted to John Budd by Southold Town in the first "Aquebogue Dividend." Some of the old split-rail fence posts, likely placed over a century ago, still stand in the hedge line and many of the oldest trees probably sprouted along that fence line.

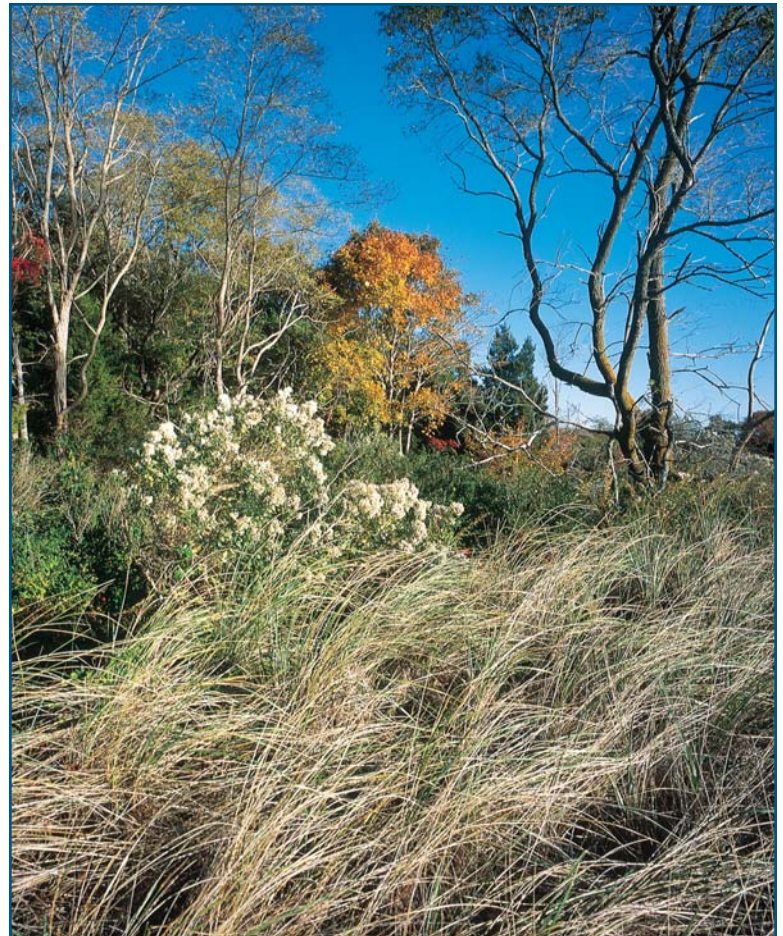


Photo: Jeff Heatley

2001 CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

Town of East Hampton/Suffolk County Acquisition - Jacob's Farm

Working with the Town of East Hampton and Suffolk County, the Trust facilitated the bargain sale purchase of a 165-acre parcel in Springs from the owner, Andrew Sabin. The property is located in the Town's Water Recharge Overlay District and in the County's South Fork Special Groundwater Protection Area, and includes some of the deepest portions of the aquifer in East Hampton. Protection of this important piece provides critical watershed protection. Prior to the acquisition, this property had a fully approved subdivision for 45 homesites that would have greatly impacted the Springs community. In addition, there are trails throughout the site, providing significant recreational benefits.

Galban Easement

The Trust received a gift of a conservation easement on 6.2 acres on Wainscott Hollow Road in Wainscott. It is currently farmed and is adjacent to 31 acres protected by Suffolk County through its Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program. This easement protects important agricultural lands and significant scenic vistas.

TOWN OF RIVERHEAD

Suffolk County/Town of Riverhead PDR - Tuccio

The Trust facilitated the sale of development rights to Suffolk County and the Town of Riverhead on 28 acres of farmland along Twomey Avenue in Riverhead. The project included the creation of a 4-lot subdivision in a wooded area of the parcel that included an existing homesite. This sale of development rights preserves active farmland and a significant scenic viewshed. In addition, it reduces the potential density of 30+ homesites to just 4.

Suffolk County/Town of Riverhead PDR - Wells

In a bargain sale transaction, Suffolk County and the Town of Riverhead purchased the development rights on 113 acres located mainly on the north side of Sound Avenue in Aquebogue. Actively farmed, this acreage has been owned by the Wells family for many generations.

Suffolk County/Town of Riverhead PDR - Zaleski

The Town of Riverhead and Suffolk County purchased the development rights on 57 acres that are part of a large block of farmland located on the north side of Main Road in Jamesport. Historically cultivated with potatoes, the land is currently in agricultural production.

Suffolk County PDR - Zeh

Working with the Trust, Suffolk County purchased the development rights on 49.7 acres of active farmland in Riverhead. This acreage is part of large block of farmland, and is currently planted in potatoes.

Suffolk County/Town of Riverhead PDR - Zilnicki/Stark

In a bargain sale transaction, Suffolk County and the Town of Riverhead purchased the development rights on 34 acres in active agricultural production. The site is part of a large block of protected farmland on the western side of Roanoke Avenue in Riverhead.

Schaffner Easement

The Trust received a conservation easement on 29.8 acres located off Union Avenue in Riverhead. Contiguous to the Trust's 27.3-acre Karen's Kettle Preserve to the south and east, the site is also bordered on the south and west by land protected by a Suffolk County purchase of development rights. Located over a sole-source aquifer, an open area of 25.8 acres, including important agricultural soils, will remain undeveloped and in its scenic state. The easement reduces the potential density to 4 units.

Wines/Gilbert Easement

Richard Wines and Nancy Gilbert donated a conservation easement on 3 contiguous parcels totaling 15.2 acres in Jamesport. This easement protects approximately 9.9 acres of agricultural land currently planted in hay and 1.7 acres of scenic woodlands and wetland with beachfront on Great Peconic Bay. Also protected by the easement are the facades of the historic buildings located within the 3.2-acre development area, including a Greek Revival residence and a mid-19th century one-room schoolhouse.

TOWN OF SHELTER ISLAND

Birch Easement

The Trust received a gift of a conservation easement on 7.5 acres along Little Ram Island Drive in Shelter Island. Consisting of two parcels with over 750' frontage on Coecles Harbor, this easement reduces density from three potential homesites to a single, existing site. In addition, the significant scenic vistas and wildlife habitat are protected.



Shelter Island Nursery Preserve

Photo: Jeff Heatley

George White Easement

The Trust received a conservation easement on 6 acres on Menantic Road, fronting West Neck Creek on Shelter Island. The property buffers wildlife habitat and provides a scenic vista from surrounding waterways. This easement insures that the property will be protected in its natural state forever.

Paard Hill Farms Easement

Lear-Ruig Partners LLC of Shelter Island conveyed a conservation easement to Peconic Land Trust on a 36.3-acre site on Ram Island Drive, known locally as John Tut's Hill. The conservation easement reduces the potential density of 13 homes to just one existing 7.7-acre home site, thereby protecting 28.6 acres in perpetuity. The property is one of ten sites that were identified by the Town of Shelter Island as the most important open spaces to be protected. It offers the public a vista of scenic open space and woodland and the restricted development will aid in the protection of Shelter Island's sole source aquifer.

Shelter Island Nursery Preserve

With the help of two conservation lenders, the Trust purchased this key 25-acre site located over the prime aquifer of Shelter Island. Following the purchase in 1999, the Trust substantially reduced the public funds necessary to protect this land by dividing the 25 acres into 2 one-acre lots (one sold privately, the other donated to the Town), 1 four-acre nursery lot with buildings subject to a conservation easement (sold to nursery), and the balance of 18+ acres that was purchased by the Town of Shelter Island and Suffolk County for watershed protection.

Suffolk County/Town of Shelter Island/Village of Dering Harbor - Hunt

The Trust facilitated the sale of 14.25 acres in Dering Harbor Village. Purchased through a collaborative effort between Suffolk County, Shelter Island Town and the Village of Dering Harbor, this woodland parcel contains important wildlife habitat and saltwater wetlands. The property also provides significant scenic vistas.

TOWN OF SOUTHAMPTON

Pearsall Easement

The Trust received a gift of a conservation easement on a 3.857-acre parcel located off Hildreth Avenue in Bridgehampton. The property, adjacent to the approximately 1-acre Pearsall Preserve, given to the Trust in 1999, contains prime soils and is currently in agricultural use.

Town of Southampton - Hendrickson Easement

The Trust facilitated the protection of 40.2 acres of farmland in Bridgehampton through a bargain sale and donation. This acreage expands a larger block of protected farmland, enhancing the viability of agricultural production in the area. *Editor's Note: this land was owned until 1999 by Richard G. Hendrickson, an extraordinary volunteer who kept track of weather on the East End for more than 70 years for the Cooperative Weather Observer Program.*

Suffolk County, Town of Southampton PDR - Wölffer

The Trust facilitated the purchase of development rights (PDR) for Suffolk County and the Town of Southampton on 115.5 acres of vineyard, winery operation and horse farm located in



Photo: Jeff Heatley

View from Montauk Highway of Sag Pond Vineyards acreage, protected by Suffolk County and Town of Southampton purchase of development rights.

Sagaponack. This conservation effort was 70% funded through the County's Greenways Program and 30% funded by the Town, protecting significant agricultural viewshed on Montauk Highway.

Town of Southampton Acquisition - Nill/Bulgin/Quiros

The Trust facilitated the acquisition of 13.7 acres in Tuckahoe Woods within an area where more than 130 acres have already been protected through Town, County and Village efforts. In addition to being located in the groundwater recharge area, this acreage provides woodland paths, scenic vistas and important plant and animal habitat.

Town of Southampton Acquisition - Switala

The Trust facilitated the purchase of a small, but significant parcel in Remsenburg. Located on the Speonk River, this wetlands site is a sensitive area, providing shoreline and wildlife habitat protection. It also adjoins other lands previously protected by the Town.

Town of Southampton Acquisition - Zebrowski

Acting on behalf of the Town, the Trust negotiated the purchase of 75 acres owned by Dolores Zebrowski. The property straddles the Ronkonkoma moraine and consists of woodland and wetlands, and an area formerly farmed and now grown over. The parcel is part of the Great Swamp and serves as a groundwater recharge area, protecting future drinking water quality. This acquisition insures that the woodlands will remain protected habitat forever and could provide important recreational opportunities for hikers and naturalists as a link in the Paumanok Path. The Town has dedicated the property as the Daniel and Anna Mulvihill Preserve, in honor of Ms. Zebrowski's parents.

Trees Easement (South Fork Land Foundation)

The Trust facilitated the gift of a conservation easement to the South Fork Land Foundation on approximately 1.5 acres of prime agricultural soils in Sagaponack. The addition of this parcel, which is adjacent to already protected acreage, enlarges a contiguous block of agricultural land. In addition, its location adjacent to a 16.7-acre

Grossi Easement

This wooded parcel, just shy of an acre, is located in a dense residential section in Manhasset, Nassau County. Martha and Olindo Grossi worked with the Trust and their neighbors to make certain this site would remain undeveloped forever. The bargain sale purchase by the Trust of a conservation easement was funded with donations from their neighbors. The preserved lot, located in a densely populated area, could have been developed with one residence. Martha Grossi, in her own words . . .

In 1948, we bought a lot on the south side of Manhasset Avenue for our first home. My husband, a practicing architect at the time, was chair and, then, Dean of the School of Architecture at Pratt Institute. He designed our home and we moved in the following year. He later became Dean of the School of Architecture at New York Institute of Technology. We had always been interested in buying the wooded lot adjacent to our house, but did not do so until many years later when it was, luckily, still available. We extended our house to provide some extra space and to give us a view of the lot. Through the years, people pestered us to sell the lot. For several decades I have been alarmed over the population explosion and the disappearance of open land. I have been an active member of Environmental Defense, Natural Resources Defense Council and the Boothbay Region Land Trust in Maine. When neighbors came to plea with us to sell them the wooded lot in order to keep it undeveloped, they found us sympathetic. Wanting to leave something forever wild, we protected the lot with the bargain sale of a conservation easement to Peconic Land Trust. To alleviate our future financial loss, our neighbors made contributions to the Trust to enable it to make the purchase. The Town of North Hempstead sent us a copy of a resolution demonstrating its approval of the conservation easement. I am happy to have saved the wooded lot and I hope that others will be encouraged to emulate us.

Nassau Land Trust

Nassau County, with one of the lowest per-capita amount of open space in New York State (excluding New York City), has been under continuous development pressure since the end of World War II. Given the County's precarious financial situation, there is little hope for public funding of open space acquisition. In response to a growing interest in open-space preservation, The Nassau Land Trust (NLT) was incorporated last year as a supporting organization of the Peconic Land Trust (PLT). As such, NLT will facilitate the preservation of open space in Nassau County under the guidance of PLT. Lloyd Zuckerberg, NLT President and Chair, serves on the PLT Board of Directors, and Trust President John v.H. Halsey serves on the NLT Board of Directors. Mr. Zuckerberg and the other two board members, Kathleen Kleinman and William Kadish, will focus on outreach efforts in Nassau County communities where there are opportunities for open space preservation.



Former Land Trust Alliance President, Jean Hocker, was the Trust's guest of honor and keynote speaker at its annual dinner, held in October at the Ross School in East Hampton.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (continued from page 5)

agricultural reserve on the White Farm creates a significant agricultural viewshed. (*The South Fork Land Foundation is a supporting organization of the Peconic Land Trust.*)

Village of Quogue, Town of Southampton Acquisition - Steinberg

Acting on behalf of the Village of Quogue, the Trust negotiated the purchase of an 8-acre parcel located within the Critical Environmental Area. Jointly purchased by the Town of Southampton and the Village, this 8-acre parcel abuts another Village/Town-owned parcel, resulting in 17.5 acres of contiguous protected wetlands and wildlife habitat. This acquisition brings the total of protected land holdings in the Village's Critical Environmental Area to 50.5 acres.

TOWN OF SOUTHOLD

Paumanok Easement

The Trust received a donation of a conservation easement on a 17-acre parcel on Cutchogue Harbor in Southold from the Wickham

family. This easement reduces the density from a potential of 8 residential units, to one waterfront unit in a 5-acre Development Area. The remaining 12 acres, consisting of woodland, meadow, and old orchard, will be preserved in perpetuity.

Town of Southold Easement - Tuthill

The Trust facilitated the gift of a 10-year term easement to the Town of Southold on 34 acres of farmland and meadow adjacent to Orient Harbor in Orient. This easement protects important agricultural lands and preserves significant scenic vistas and wildlife habitat.

Town of Southold/Suffolk County Acquisition - Lettieri

The Lettieri family gave 2.6 acres and sold an additional 13 acres (two 1-acre parcels are located on Long Island Sound) to the Trust. The 15.6 acres total will be re-conveyed to the Town of Southold and Suffolk County as "tenants in common." This important parcel is part of a contiguous expanse of protected land in the environmentally sensitive Dam Pond area.

Shaping the Future of Conservation

The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) has two major public policy goals in 2002—to enact new federal tax incentives for land conservation, and to create and implement a well-funded federal farmland protection program. Significant progress toward these goals was made last year. In December, the Senate debated the farm bill and Sen. Tom Harkin of (Iowa), chairman of the Agriculture Committee, agreed to amendments to the Senate bill making major increases in conservation funding. The Senate defeated several attempts to replace Sen. Harkin's proposal with one providing significantly less funding for conservation. Under the Senate bill, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farmland Protection Program would provide up to \$500 million a year in matching grants to state and local governments and to land trusts for the purchase of permanent conservation easements on working farmland. The bill would also provide for the purchase of up to 2 million acres of conservation easements on rangelands, and restore and protect 1.25 million acres of wetlands through the Wetlands Reserve Program.

The goal in 2002 is to get Senate approval for the bill and to persuade the House of Representatives to accept higher funding levels. (The House passed a farm bill in June 2001 with far less funding for conservation.) If this takes place early in the year, focus can then be shifted to implementing the new farm bill. LTA will be working with the Department of Agriculture to make the rules for these new conservation programs as friendly as possible to land trusts, and to inform land trusts about how best to take advantage of these new funding opportunities.

The other major priority for 2002 will be the creation of ambitious new tax incentives for land conservation. These proposals would increase the income tax benefits of donating conservation easements, and cut capital gains taxes on sales of land or of ease-

ments to a land trust or government conservation agency. In 2001, influential members of the House and Senate introduced bills to create these new incentives, and the Bush Administration endorsed the capital gains tax cut for conservation sales. However, far more work must be done in order to enact them.

Much of that work must be done by you. Land trusts help shape the future every day by protecting land in their communities. LTA can provide you and your Congressional delegation with information about the potential good these tax changes could bring. We can advise you about how best to influence your Congressional delegation to help enact these changes. But only you and your land trust can convey the importance of these changes to your Representative and your Senators. Their job is to represent you, and they take that seriously. Tell them about what you need to make your community a better place.

Please contact your Senators to urge them to co-sponsor S. 701 (increasing the tax benefits of donating a conservation easement) and S. 1329 (reducing capital gains tax on land sales for conservation). For more information on S. 701 and S. 1329, please visit LTA's Web site at www.lta.org/publicpolicy/adv_070501.htm.

Russell Shay, LTA Director of Public Policy

Editor's note: As Chair of LTA's New York Advisory Committee, Trust President John v.H. Halsey helps to shape annual legislative priorities in New York, guide the development of financial resources, promote LTA's Standards and Practices and provide field assistance to area land trusts. For more information on LTA's Northeast program, please contact Melissa Danskin, New York Program Associate, in the LTA Northeast office, (518) 587-0774.



Quail Hill Farm apprentices Scott Stewart and Forrest Liss flank AmeriCorps volunteers Eric Williams, Beth Albers, Steve O'Connell, and Becky Vanecek. AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that provide opportunities for full-time service in exchange for education awards. Members serve in teams to provide community service in areas of environment, public safety, education and unmet human needs, with a focus on national disaster relief.



Dr. Alvin Mesnikoff (center) and family on land he owns off Peconic Avenue in Shelter Island. Dr. Mesnikoff donated a conservation easement on the 1.2-acre parcel, which has approximately 400' of shoreline on Crab Creek. The site had the potential for one residence, but is now protected from development.

In Memoriam: Dorothy Dalsimer

1913 – 2001

Dorothy Dalsimer, a long-time North Sea resident and Trust supporter, was an inspiration to family and friends. Anyone who could kayak in Alaska at the age of 87 would be. A loyal and loving parent and grandparent, she invited her children and grandchildren along for the trip, and it is an experience they will always remember. A naturalist who loved the East End, particularly its bays and woods, Dorothy had the enormous energy and strength needed for kayaking. Many of her friends were swept up in her enthusiasm and joined her in the sport. At her 80th birthday celebra-



tion at the Waterside restaurant, a dozen or so of her friends kayaked across the Peconic Bay carrying signs that read “Happy Birthday.” On land, Dorothy loved her begonias and was known to resuscitate failing plants. Dorothy and her husband, Philip, built their home near Big Fresh Pond in 1962, moving there full-time in the late 1970s. She played an important role in the acquisition of PLT’s Big Fresh Pond Preserve and other conservation efforts in the area. The twinkle in her eyes, her visits to the PLT office, and her commitment to our work, are all sorely missed.

Did you know . . .

Acres protected by land trusts through conservation easements	2.6 million
Percentage increase between 1990 and 2000.....	476%
Number of land trusts nationwide	1,273

Source: Summary data from the National Land Trust Census as reported by the Land Trust Alliance

Schoolhouse Finds New Home

In order to make room at Pugliese Vineyards in Cutchogue, Ralph Pugliese needed to find a new home for his one-room schoolhouse. Believed to be the original Cutchogue schoolhouse, dating from the 19th century, it was a building everyone wanted to preserve. Finding a location was another story, but luckily enough, it didn’t have far to go. Everyone agreed that the site of the Fort Corchaug at Downs Farm Preserve Visitors’ Center made the most sense. Volunteers are restoring the building to the extent possible and visitors will be welcomed at a grand opening on October 12, 2002.



A vintage schoolhouse, donated by Ralph Pugliese, on its way to a new location adjacent to the Fort Corchaug at Downs Farm Preserve Visitors’ Center in Cutchogue. (Special thanks to Ernie Davis of Davis House and Building Movers!)



Workers ready the foundation for the schoolhouse.



Spring seedlings soak up some sun...

Unwanted Guests: Alien/Invasive Vegetation

When asked to name environmental threats to the East End of Long Island, most people cite well-publicized problems such as increased development, shoreline disturbances, degraded surface water quality, and altered hydrology in freshwater ponds, saltwater creeks and saltwater marshes. All are important issues that are studied extensively and monitored closely by various national and local agencies and organizations. But another threat exists that is becoming a major resource concern: the rapid expansion of certain alien plant species.

An **alien** species is one that is not native or indigenous to an area. For the Eastern Long Island region, this means the plant was not present at the time of European colonization or that it did not arrive by virtue of a natural extension of its range without obvious aid from humans. The problem with non-indigenous plant species is not a new phenomenon. In 1735, John Bartram, the famous Philadelphia botanist, was alarmed to see that Lilacs and Double Narcissus were “already too numerous” around Philadelphia, “as the roots brought by early settlers had spread enormously.” Many of the seriously invasive non-native species that plague us today were established in this country as ornamentals by the beginning of the 20th Century. Early herbarium labels for these plants often included comments such as, “naturalized by birds,” or more presciently, as “garden escape.”

An **invasive** species, whether native or alien, exhibits distinct characteristics. The five key biologic traits that characterize an invasive species are the plant: 1) produces large quantities of seeds or propagules, 2) has very effective dispersal mechanisms, 3) is readily established, 4) grows rapidly, and 5) is a very effective competitor. The combination of these characteristics gives certain species an advantage over less aggressive types, allowing them to establish themselves in a natural area with little or no human intervention. Invasive plants that are native exhibit these same characteristics with the exception that natural succession keeps most of them in check over the long haul. Lacking natural enemies in their new environments, invasive alien species can spread rapidly as they displace native vegetation.

Individuals are often responsible for introducing alien plant material either intentionally or unknowingly. Several species of alien plants now make their homes on the North and South Forks of Long Island and are spreading at alarming rates. These vegetative threats include a number of plants that are familiar sights in our landscape:

Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) is a case where the distinction between native and non-native is unclear. After the Hurricane of 1938, *Phragmites australis*, formerly a coastal reed, encroached on inland wetlands. Some scientists believe that, around 1900, a new aggressive strain of *Phragmites* was introduced from Europe and it is this strain that is invasive.

Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) was introduced to North America in the mid-1800's as an ornamental plant and it soon spread from Louisiana to Maine. It can grow to a height of 60 feet, so even mature forest trees are not safe from its smothering grasp.

Garlic Mustard (*Allaria petiolata*), native to Europe, was first reported on Long Island in 1868, where it was probably introduced by settlers as part of their herb gardens. Primarily an invader of disturbed forest communities, Garlic Mustard is common in the dap-

pled shade of forest edges and along roadsides. Prolific seed production and density of growth allow Garlic Mustard to easily out-compete our native woodland flora for light, moisture, and nutrients. The effect is especially devastating on spring blooming species such as Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), Wild Ginger (*Asarum canadensis*), Toothwort (*Dentaria spp.*) and Hepatica (*Hepatica acutiloba*), all of which are attempting to flower and produce seed at the same time as the invader.

Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), a native of central China, was introduced in 1784 in Philadelphia as a horticultural specimen and was well-established here by the mid-1800s. Resistance to disease and pests as well as tolerance for poor soils and pollution made it valuable in urban settings. This is the classic “A Tree Grows In Brooklyn.” The Tree of Heaven has spread into rural, agricultural, and natural communities where today it is considered a serious problem, commonly found invading abandoned fields or open meadows where it forms island-like colonies.

Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), a European import, is now a highly aggressive invader of North American wetlands. It is indeed a beautiful sight in late summer as it blooms intensely colored magenta stands in roadside ditches and on the edge of ponds. Don't let its appearance fool you. Purple Loosestrife chokes out nearly all the native vegetation where it occurs and severely degrades wildlife habitat. Cattail (*Typha latifolia*) is in serious danger of being overwhelmed by Loosestrife. This plant literally drains wetlands with an aggressive race for water as it reduces the habitat for native vegetation.

Unfortunately, non-native invasive vegetation is abundant on some of the preserves and easements that are under the protective umbrella of Peconic Land Trust. Unimpeded by competition, the plants' rapid growth rates allow them to spread quickly into new areas where they out-compete native vegetation for available nutrients, water, and space. Loss of native plants causes a decrease in food and shelter for those animals that rely upon them. The result is an ecosystem dominated by alien species with a lower biodiversity at all levels. Over time, the distinct environments of North America could begin to look more and more alike. Repeat the scenario all over the world and we could begin to see a homogenized planet.

Reversing the tide of an invasive alien species onslaught can be an extremely time consuming and expensive endeavor, but it is a critical step in the preservation of the unique plants and natural landscapes that help define our heritage on Eastern Long Island. Many methods are being developed and studied to combat the spread of invasive non-native plants. Some proven methods of eradication are controlled use of herbicides, mechanical removal, and even the controversial method of bio-control. Often two or more methods used together are most effective. If you are concerned about the possibility of “unwanted guests” on your property and would like to learn more about non-native invasive plants, how to identify them, and how to manage them, the New England Wildflower Society maintains an excellent list of resources on their web site, which can be accessed at: <http://www.newfs.org/invasive/invasive.htm>. Please . . . be sure to check with your local and state resource managers before undertaking any work, since a permit may be required.

Maureen Cullinane

Special thanks to the Baker Foundation . . .

We are in our 13th year of community-supported agriculture at Quail Hill Farm, nestled in the fine soil and woodland of Amagansett. The apprenticeship program that we offer is an important and integral part of this farm which now serves over 180 families (450 or so people) through our summer share and our winter share. School groups, children with special needs, groups of seniors and gardeners, regularly visit and participate in all aspects of community farming. Our apprentices (we always get a good crop!) are active in the fields every day and also active in communication with farm members and other members of the public. The farm, from the inception, a project of Peconic Land Trust, is listed with a variety of national and international gardening organizations. In any single year, we receive up to 50 applications (some from as far away as Ghana and Russia) for the apprenticeship positions we offer each growing season. Until last year, the difficulty

has been to find adequate housing in the resort community of East Hampton town. Because of a grant awarded to us by the Baker Foundation, we have been able to offer positions to more candidates, and we certainly have attracted a number of fine, inquisitive, dedicated young people. Last year, three out of four of those who lived in the house just recently completed their degree in education. The farm, including all programs we offer here, has never operated with such efficiency. Thanks to the Baker Foundation grant which provided seed money to relocate a house (the gift of Charlotte Johnston, Barbara Adams, and Hilary Adams) to our Accabonac Preserve, we can now provide a “home” to those seeking the education training that our apprenticeship program offers. A good home is good for the spirit!

From Quail Hill Preserve...

Unlike any other winter, we were able to leave carrots in the ground until mid-January, and we're still cutting collards and brussels sprouts from the field! Our seeds for the 2002 season arrived in February and March, and we have sowed onions, leeks, parsley, and snapdragons. I am still amazed to trace the seasons through the life of a seed: we will taste the first leeks some 200 days after seeding them into trays. The celery root, stored in our root cellar, was still flavorful a year after it was planted as a miniscule seed last March. Although we planted tomatoes by hand into our homemade seed mix in March, we will not taste the sweetest “Brandywine” until September.

Each day I am reminded of the pattern of lives that meet through Quail Hill, forming a collective response (to soil, fruit, and flower). The narrative of this pattern is revised and enlarged when a hand reaches to cut some cosmos, when someone kneels to pluck a ripe *rosa bianca*. Another hand whisks away pigweed or lamb's quarters, a worker's hoe stirs soil at the base of broccoli . . . this is active cultivation of a sense of place. To cultivate is also to expand the boundaries of home, to increase the potential for harvest, to prepare for possibility.

Tying up the tomatoes twelve years ago, I did not anticipate the term of my work here. Today, because of the affairs of the world, and in anticipation of another season of community farming, I reread the aims of *Orion Magazine*: “. . . to explore the ethic of humane stewardship; to advance the notion that effective stewardship comes from feelings of respect and admiration for the earth” And, as Middlebury College professor John Elder writes, “In education and conservation alike, we must pursue stewardship not simply as the maintenance of valuable resources but also as a way of fostering a broader experience of democracy and community.” As a steward of these local fields, I love to

Peconic Land Trust's Quail Hill Farm in Amagansett

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converse as part of the community of soil, seeds, plants and animals, but also vital is the conversation we have created as a community of people exploring an ethic. Such action is not without risk, and need not necessarily anticipate reward. When the sun rises and a thin mist hovers over orchard grass, thrush song falls within the cedars. And, I am reminded of this observation by the late philosopher Henry Bugbee: “Our true home is wilderness, even the world of everyday.”

Scott Chaskey, Quail Hill Preserve Manager

Leave a Legacy to Future Long Islanders . . .

If you would like to extend your support of the Trust's work in protecting farmland and open space on Long Island, you may do so in a variety of ways such as naming the Trust a beneficiary of your IRA or a life insurance policy, for example. If you would like to include a provision in your will to bequeath cash, securities, or other asset property to the Trust, the following language may be used and modified as necessary:

For gifts of real estate

"To the Peconic Land Trust, Incorporated, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, incorporated under the laws of the State of New York in 1983, having as its principal address 296 Hampton Road, Southampton, New York 11968, I hereby give and devise my real property at (street address here) to Peconic Land Trust, Incorporated, of Southampton, New York."

For cash gifts

"I give and bequeath \$_____ to Peconic Land Trust, Inc. of Southampton, New York."

For gifts of securities

"I give and bequeath _____ (number of shares) of (name here) common stock to Peconic Land Trust, Inc. of Southampton, New York."

For asset property such as paintings, other artwork, antiques, etc.

"I give and bequeath (description or name of items) to Peconic Land Trust, Inc. of Southampton, New York."

If you or your attorney would like to discuss a potential bequest, please call Marsha Kenny, Director of Development, at (631) 283-3195. All inquiries will be kept confidential. All gifts to Peconic Land Trust are tax-deductible. Contributions of \$250 or more will be acknowledged in our Annual Report.

Other Ways to Support Land Conservation

Matching Gifts: Many companies have matching gifts programs; some allow matches for others in addition to employees—spouses, retired employees, spouses of retired employees, widows or widowers of retired employees, and non-employee directors of the company. Please check with your employee benefits office. If your employer has a matching gifts program, your gift to the Trust can be doubled or tripled.

Scallop Shell Memorial Gifts: A gift in memory of a loved one or friend is a special tribute to those who appreciated the beauty of Long Island. To make your gift, send your check, along with the name of the person being memorialized, to the Trust. Please indicate the name and address of a family member or friend of the deceased to whom we can send an acknowledgment of your charitable gift.

Special occasion gifts: Commemorate an anniversary, birthday, wedding or other special occasion with a gift to conservation. The Trust will send a card in your name to whomever you designate (just provide us with a mailing address!).

You may make a charitable gift to the Trust on our secure website www.peconiclandtrust.org.



Many thanks to Peter Stoutenburgh, Environment East, who donated and installed a flagpole and flag at the Trust's North Fork Stewardship Center in November. Photographed at our official flag-raising were (l. to r.) Peter Stoutenburgh, Trust Vice President Tim Caufield, Barbara Stoutenburgh, and former Trust Board member Paul Stoutenburgh.



PECONIC LAND TRUST

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Southampton, NY 11969



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Mission Statement

The Peconic Land Trust is a nonprofit, tax-exempt conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of farmland and open space on Long Island. To this end, the Trust acquires and manages land as well as easements for conservation purposes. In addition, the Trust assists farmers and other landowners and municipalities in the identification and implementation of alternatives to full-yield development.

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