



**LAND
CONSERVANCY**
Saving Special Places

ViewPoints

Vol. 3. No. 2

July 2006

Peter Berle Addresses Annual Meeting



Peter Berle

About sixty members attended the Conservancy's Annual Meeting, held in May at the Stockade Restaurant in Schenectady. Peter Berle, former New York State Commissioner of Environmental Conservation and President of the National Audubon Society, was our guest speaker. His talk asked the question, "The Land Ethic – is it surviving?" and answered with an inspiring "Yes!"



Tammy Cousins and Board President Dan Driscoll

Tammy Cousins, co-chair of the Bennett Hill Neighborhood Committee, and David Martin, member of the Land Stewardship Committee, and retiring Chair of the Holt Preserve Neighborhood Committee, were each presented the "Open Space Preservation Leadership Award" for their dedication to land protection and their commitment to the Conservancy. Both are former Board members and long-time volunteers.

The Conservancy's "Saving Special Places" award was presented to Theresa Egan, Bethlehem Town Supervisor. Kyle Kotary, a member of the town board accepted it on her behalf.

Don Rittner, Schenectady County and City historian, led early arrivals on an interesting tour of the historic Stockade area.

On a Clear Day....

A "Gala Champagne Brunch"

Sunday, September 17, noon to 4 pm

At the Rensselaerville hilltop home of Marvin and Laura Bolotsky

Brunch from the bounty of our area.

Silent Auction of items ranging from the useful to the totally indulgent.

Music reflecting the beautiful surroundings.

Look for your invitation in August, or call MHLC at 436-6346.

MHLC Begins Underwriting on WAMC

For years we've heard many of our members' names during WAMC fund drives; thinking that other WAMC listeners may want to support a local conservation organization, we have decided to begin underwriting Ward Stone's *In Our Backyard* (Mondays at 8:30 pm and Saturdays at 1:30 pm). We hope you'll agree this is another good way to tell more people about our work saving special places.

-Jeff Leon

Mohawk Valley Views Contest Begins

To further our mission of "Saving Special Places" the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy is sponsoring the first "Mohawk Valley Views" contest. Through February, 2007, we are inviting people to submit photographs featuring viewpoints that showcase the beauty of the Mohawk Valley in our new service area of Montgomery and Schenectady Counties. The view need not be panoramic, nor must it include the river, but it must represent the rich natural and cultural heritage of the Mohawk Valley, intrinsic to the region's quality of life. Entries will be posted on the MHLC website. Winners will be recognized on the website and in the local media, and will be presented with professionally framed photos of their winning view at the our annual meeting in Spring 2007. For details, and to see the entries thus far, go to www.mohawkhudson.org/MVV/MohawkViews.htm.

Swift Trail Blazer



Bob Smith, trailblazing at Swift Preserve

Volunteering is a wonderful way to "give back." The Conservancy has a variety of opportunities and needs. Each of our committees welcomes volunteers. Get your hands dirty by helping with preserve stewardship. If you

have great people-skills, Membership and Fundraising will vie for your assistance. For rewarding outdoor work one of the Neighborhood Committees will be the place. See the listing of volunteer needs at www.mohawkhudson.org/volunteer.htm. Whether you can spare an hour or a day, leave a message at 436-6346 or mhlc@mohawkhudson.org.

Bethlehem Family Day

MHLC staff and volunteers greeted visitors to all three Bethlehem preserves in spite of wet weather on the afternoon of Sunday June 4. This was a chance for town residents to discover the special places in their own back yards! For the occasion, volunteers from MHLC's Tri-Village Greenway Committee marked trails at the Swift and Normanskill preserves. Most of the visitors were coming to our preserves for the first time.

The Tri-Village Greenway Committee is also working on management plans for these preserves. Money raised at a recent benefit concert by the Friendship Singers will fund kiosks stocked with trail maps and directions. Two of our volunteers, board member Ted Putney and Tri-Village Greenway chair Mike DiPaolo, are members of the Town of Bethlehem's Citizens Advisory Committee on Conservation, which is charged with exploring funding sources for land preservation and options for public trails in the Slingerlands area.

-Peggy Sherman

Ashford Glen Bird Walk

On Saturday May 6, 2006, the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy and the Hudson Mohawk Bird Club held a bird walk at the Ashford Glen Preserve. It was raining lightly, but the canopy of tall trees kept the nine participants dry. The walk was led by Ellen Pemrick with the able assistance of John Hershey and Hank Stebbins.

Birds heard and/or observed on this outing included:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mallard (flying overhead) | Tufted Titmouse |
| Red-Tailed Hawk (ditto) | White-Breasted Nuthatch |
| Mourning Dove | Wood Thrush |
| Red-Bellied Woodpecker | American Robin |
| Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker | Black-Throated Green |
| Downy Woodpecker | Warbler |
| Great Crested Flycatcher | Ovenbird |
| Blue Jay | Chipping Sparrow |
| American Crow | Northern Cardinal |
| Black-Capped Chickadee | American Goldfinch |

Five owl pellets were discovered around one tree, but it

was not possible to determine which type of owl left them. Skunk cabbage was abundant in the Preserve, and the Christmas ferns, marsh marigold, and red trillium were enjoyed by all. Surprisingly, no Hairy or Pileated Woodpeckers, Brown Creeper, or Wild Turkeys were observed – all of these are common to the Preserve and adjacent woodlands. Both a Hermit Thrush and a Black-and-White Warbler were spotted in the glen the day before the formal walk.

– Lois Porter

Featuring the Normanskill Preserve

One of our newer preserves, a gift of Albany County In 2005, the Normanskill Preserve includes over 3,600 feet of frontage along the Normanskill. Its 46 acres of lovely wooded ravines with some steep slopes contain some of the lands that subsided from the north side of Delaware Avenue a few years ago. Trail marking and construction are not yet complete. We will soon be building an entrance kiosk with funds raised by the Friendship Singers at their spring concert in Delmar.



A Blue Heron in the Normanskill – Dan Driscoll

The preserve is located on the Bethlehem side of the Normanskill. The completed trails are accessible from the parking lot at Bagdon Environmental on the north side of Delaware Avenue at the west end of the Delaware Avenue Bridge.

Conservancy Receives Grants for Mohawk Valley Work

MHLC has recently received two transaction grants, funded by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and awarded by the Land Trust Alliance through the New York State Conservation Partnership Program. The Land Trust Alliance is an umbrella agency serving land trusts nation-wide.

A grant of \$4,250 will enable the Conservancy to cover survey and legal costs associated with the acquisition of a conservation easement on the 37-acre Crauer property in Wolf Hollow. This project will help protect Chaughtanoonda Creek, a Mohawk River tributary, and important archeological and geological research sites.

The second grant, of \$1,000, will help cover transaction costs associated with donation of a conservation easement on a 100-acre property in Wolf Hollow. This project will add to a complex of protected lands in the Wolf Hollow / Hoffman Fault area that were threatened by development.

A previous generous donation by the William Gundry Broughton Private Charitable Foundation will help the Conservancy complete these projects in Wolf Hollow.

Mark Your Calendar

Wednesday July 26, 6:30 to 8:00 PM

Dog Days of Summer at the Phillipinkill Preserve.

Enjoy a relaxing evening walk with your dog and explore the sights, sounds, and smells of our preserve. Refreshments will be provided for both dogs and their people!

Volunteer Recruitment Socials:

Tuesday August 1, at 7 pm.

in the MHLC Offices, 1499 New Scotland Rd. Slingerlands

And Thursday August 10, at 7:00 PM.

at the Glenville Grange, 235 W Glenville Rd, Amsterdam, NY.

Learn more about the Conservancy and how you can become involved in *Saving Special Places*.

August 26, Clarksville Heritage Day.

To benefit the Clarksville Historical Society. The event will include a car show, exhibits, yard sale, and tour of MHLC's Bennett Hill Preserve.

Saturday September 30, at 1:30 PM.

Hiking at the Holt Preserve. For more details watch www.mohawkhudson.org/events.htm.

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Won't you please join us?

Your Support is crucial to our efforts to preserve the Mohawk Hudson Region's natural & scenic resources: scenic vistas, farmland, open space, and wildlife.

- Benefactor \$1,000
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Saving Special Places

Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy
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Name: _____
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- Please send me more information about land conservation options available.
- I would like to host a Friend-raiser Gathering.
- I would like to be a Conservancy volunteer.
- The above membership is a gift from _____

All contributions to the MHLC, Inc. are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law. A copy of MHLC's latest annual report may be obtained upon request from MHLC or from the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.