



# **Westchester Land Trust**

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**2005  
Annual Report**

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# *Land Preservation 2005: The Answer is Partnerships*

**L**and preservation partnerships have never been more important in Westchester than they were in 2005. Organizations, agencies, foundations and individuals came together to work on preservation projects big and small, and Westchester Land Trust is proud to have been an important part of it.

But we didn't do it for the sake of the partnerships themselves.

We did it because it's the best way to protect land.

In 2005 Westchester Land Trust worked on four acquisitions that will result in 1,139 acres being protected. The cost: more than \$31 million.

That's more than any one organization or government agency would want to spend. The solution was partnerships. We worked with at least 11 groups to assemble the funding and expertise to preserve those 1,139 acres forever.

We also protected land through conservation easements, completing 17, covering 200-plus acres. And we made great progress with local advocates and officials to improve environmental protections through better planning.

The thanks, of course, goes to our partners and to our supporters. To all of you, we're happy to present this summary of our 2005 achievements. ■



Samuel F. Pryor III  
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Paul Gallay  
Executive Director



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# *Table of Contents*

<b>PARTNERS IN PRESERVATION</b> <i>A message to our supporters</i>	<b>1</b>
<b>LAND PRESERVATION</b> <i>The Leon Levy Preserve</i>	<b>4</b>
<b>LAND PRESERVATION</b> <i>Angle Fly, Leatherman's Ridge, Purdys Ridge</i>	<b>6</b>
<b>LAND PRESERVATION</b> <i>Conservation easements</i>	<b>8</b>
<b>COMMUNITIES</b> <i>Acting locally across town borders</i>	<b>10</b>
<b>LAND PROTECTION 2005</b> <i>The complete list</i>	<b>12</b>
<b>FINANCIAL PICTURE</b> <i>Revenues &amp; expenses</i>	<b>13</b>
<b>OUR DONORS</b>	<b>14</b>

THE LEON LEVY PRESERVE



*The Leon Levy Preserve includes extensive trails and the picturesque ruins of an old estate.*



**W**e all had promises to keep.

The Westchester communities with open space funds promised to use their money wisely. They promised to combine it where possible with money from other government agencies and organizations. And they promised to buy the best properties with it.

Westchester Land Trust made a promise too. We promised to work closely with those communities, to lead when asked and to help wherever possible.

2005 was the year in which those promises were kept, in a big way.

There's no better example than a new 386-acre preserve in Lewisboro, on what used to be called the Bell property.

Town residents started advocating for its preservation more than a decade ago. WLT and its local chapter, the Lewisboro Land Trust, joined the effort in the late 1990s.

In 2000, town voters easily passed a \$2 million ballot proposition. And in 2004, the Town Board and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection each contributed \$1 million, and two private foundations made extraordinarily generous grants.

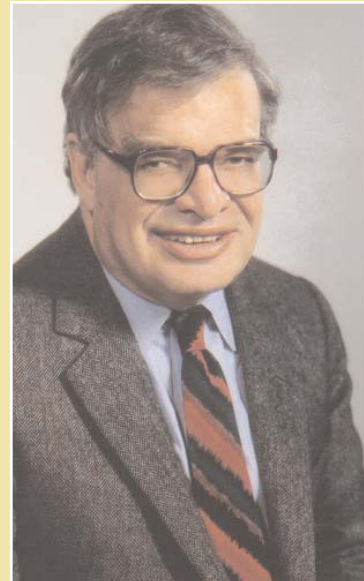
**The preserve protects 386 acres**



The Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Foundation helped out with \$500,000. And most importantly, the Jerome Levy Foundation made a \$5 million contribution toward the purchase.

Instrumental in that gift was the support of Shelby White, a Lewisboro resident and philanthropist whose late husband was the primary benefactor of the Jerome Levy Foundation.

Ms. White's leadership and generosity galvanized the preservation effort, and in October of 2005 the deal was closed. In honor of her late husband, this new sanctuary is called the Leon Levy Preserve. ■



*The late Leon Levy was the primary benefactor of the Jerome Levy Foundation, the generosity of which was instrumental in creating the Leon Levy Preserve.*

ANGLE FLY, LEATHERMAN'S RIDGE, PURDYS RIDGE



*Somers Town Supervisor Mary Beth Murphy and Michael Barnhart, chairman of Somers' open space committee, worked on acquisition of the Angle Fly Preserve.*

**T**he promises of the local commitment to land preservation paid off elsewhere too.

The biggest project Westchester Land Trust has ever been involved in is the purchase of 654 acres in Somers. Asked by Town officials in 2004 to explore an acquisition, Westchester Land Trust helped assemble a consortium of funders -- New York City, New York State, Westchester County and the Town of Somers -- and in July the town signed a contract to buy the land for \$20.5 million. Gov. George Pataki, County Executive Andy Spano, State Sen. Vincent Leibell, Deputy NYC DEP Commissioner David Tweedy (pictured on facing page) and others announced the agreement at the site last summer.

**1,600 acres  
bought since  
2000**

The cooperation among the purchasers has been unprecedented, which befits an acquisition that is believed to be the biggest park purchase ever in Westchester. When the deal is complete, probably in the first half of 2006, the property will become the Angle Fly Preserve. It will provide trails for hiking, protect an important tract of land near New York City's Croton Reservoir, and preserve a large, intact plant and wildlife habitat.

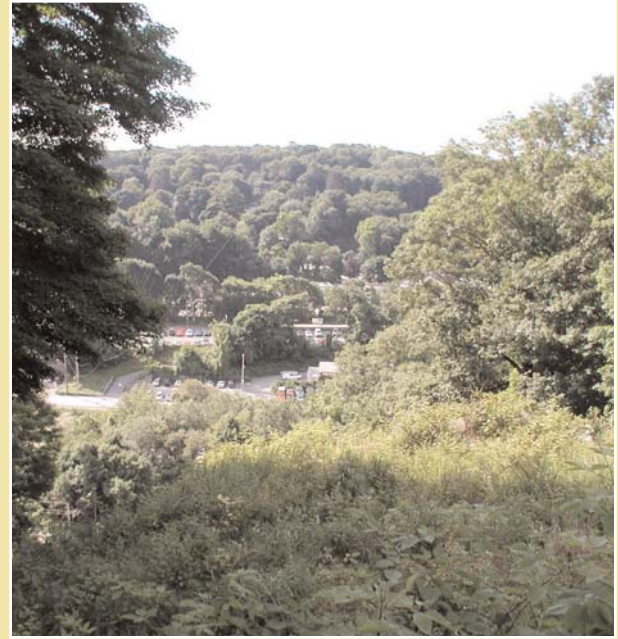
The Land Trust also helped the Town of Bedford buy a spectacular 33-acre wooded and rocky tract called Leatherman's Ridge, in Bedford Hills -- a deal completed in less than a year. The property cost \$1.3 million -- \$1.275 million from the Town of Bedford's land acquisition fund and the rest donated by local residents.

In North Salem, the new Purdys Ridge preserve, which the Town of North Salem bought in 2005, rises above the historic hamlet of Purdys. A thick deciduous forest covers the ridge, and its streams flow toward New York City's reservoirs. The \$1.15 million cost was borne by the Town, which contributed \$1 million from its open space fund, and the North Salem Open Land Foundation, which contributed 10 percent. Westchester Land Trust helped negotiate the deal.

When the Angle Fly purchase is complete, 11 communities will have invested \$22 million from local open space funds since 2000, and combined it with \$38.5 million from the state, the county, New York City and local residents.

The result: more than 1,600 acres protected, forever.

That is precisely what we all promised in 2000. And, working together, it's what we have delivered. ■



*Leatherman's Ridge, in Bedford Hills, top. The Angle Fly partners. Jeff Morris of the North Salem Open Land Foundation and Purdys resident Brian Bartsch worked on the Purdys Ridge acquisition.*

## CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

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*The Stevens easement, top. Many WLT easements, including the Perl easement in Croton, help protect the region's drinking water.*

**I**n 2005, Westchester Land Trust worked with more partners to preserve public lands than at any time since our founding in 1988. And when the land purchases are completed, the numbers will be impressive indeed - four new parks, 1,139 acres of new parkland created.

But while we broke new ground in public acquisition, we also continued to collaborate with private landowners to protect land through conservation easements. In all, Westchester Land Trust completed 17 easements in 2005. Some were small, some big, but all were significant.

Eugene and Abby Perl, for example, donated a 1.5-acre conservation easement that provides watershed protec-

tion and habitat protection, and keeps an important community view from becoming spoiled. A 1.5-acre easement might not seem like much, but the Perls' land is in Croton-on-Hudson, where the preservation of even small parcels can protect important environmental characteristics.

In Lewisboro, Robert Walker donated 26 acres to the Town of Lewisboro, with the understanding that it would be protected

**300 acres  
protected near  
Guard Hill**

forever by a conservation easement with Westchester Land Trust. The Walker property is in the heart of a key biodiversity area and, among other things, provides for habitat protection.

Nearby is a smaller but important easement donated by Margaret Stevens on a 3.6 acre tract in Lewisboro. The Stevens easement protects a beautiful meadow, a habitat that is becoming increasingly rare in Westchester.

In Bedford, Kristen Carollo's 31-acre easement, Laurance and Mindy Friedman's 10-acre easement, and Charles and Carolee Jones's 9.5-acre easement mean that WLT has now protected 300 acres in and around the beautiful Guard Hill area.

The Carollo easement helps us protect Westchester's agricultural heritage. In 2005 we also protected 26 acres of agricultural land in North Salem, thanks to easements donated by Peter and Jackie Kamenstein (16.4 acres) and Peter and Petra Wiederhorn (10 acres).

As always, we thank our preservation partners. They are proof that protecting land is a collaborative endeavor. ■



*An easement donated by Peter Kamenstein, left, covers 16.4 acres. WLT also protected land in Cortlandt, top, and Lewisboro, above.*

ACTING LOCALLY ACROSS TOWN BORDERS



Top: Town Supervisors Gary Warshauer of Pound Ridge, left, and Jim Nordgren of Lewisboro have been leaders of the biodiversity protection efforts. Right: Researchers work in a marsh in Pound Ridge.



Westchester County residents are known for their involvement in community issues. Their communities are their homes, and they work tirelessly to improve them. Open space preservation and community character are always priorities, and in 2005 Westchester Land Trust again worked closely with local advocates to make sure land decisions enhance the county's towns, villages and cities.

There was a renewed interest in land preservation and better planning in Cortlandt and North Castle, for example, and WLT's two newest chapters -- the Cortlandt Land Trust and the North Castle Land Trust -- provided much of the impetus.

**Towns are working to protect habitat**

We're confident that the work of the local advocates will result in more municipal land protection, more conservation easements, and better development.

There was unmistakable momentum in protecting wildlife habitats in two important biodiversity areas -- the Eastern Westchester Biotic Corridor and the Croton-to-Highlands biodiversity area.

Both regions (the first includes parts of Pound Ridge,

Lewisboro and North Salem, the other parts of Cortlandt, New Castle, Yorktown and Putnam Valley) are the product of years of study by the Wildlife Conservation Society/Metropolitan Conservation Alliance, and both contain high quality habitats and the plant and wildlife species those habitats support.

In 2005, Westchester Land Trust, the North Salem Open Land Foundation, the PRLC and the Lewisboro Land Trust (a WLT chapter) began a joint biodiversity protection program by bringing together 100 people who own land in the Eastern Westchester Biotic Corridor to encourage land protection through conservation easements.

And WLT convened advocates and officials in those towns to begin work on an intermunicipal conservation ordinance. Two dozen representatives of the three towns came together in North Salem to begin working on the nuts and bolts of a protection law that, if it's adopted, might well be the first of its kind in the country.

In doing so, we've laid the foundation for better protections, and established a model for other communities to work from. ■



*Local advocates are working to protect important habitats. Below, Cortlandt Land Trust members Katharine McLoughlin, Lisa Moir, Stephanie Johnson and Kathleen Sutherland.*



*Our sincere thanks to those who generously preserved their land, or contributed time and funds to acquire land, with Westchester Land Trust's assistance:*

**Jerome Levy Foundation, Town of Lewisboro, City of New York, Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Foundation** - acquisition of the 386-acre Leon Levy Preserve, Lewisboro.

**Town of North Salem and the North Salem Open Land Foundation** - acquisition of the 66-acre Purdys Ridge preserve.

**Nicholas and Hanay Angell** - 40-acre easement, Cortlandt.

**Town of Bedford, residents of Bedford Hills** - acquisition of the 33-acre Leatherman's Ridge preserve.

**Kristen Carollo** - 31-acre easement, Bedford.

**Robert Walker** - 26-acre donation to Town of Lewisboro and easement to WLT.

**Michael and Virginia DiGuglielmo** - 19-acre easement, Lewisboro.

**Peter and Jackie Kamenstein** - 16.4-acre easement, North Salem.

**Umberto Santaroni** - 12-acre easement, Somers.

**Laurance and Mindy Friedman** - 10-acre easement, Bedford.

**Peter and Petra Wiederhorn** - 10-acre easement, North Salem.

**Charles and Carolee Jones** - 9.5-acre easement, Bedford.

**MBIA** - 8-acre easement, North Castle.

**Denise Mendocino** - 5-acre easement, Lewisboro.

**Leonardo and Lara LeBrun** - 4.6-acre easement, Bedford.

**Town of Yorktown** - 4.4-acre acquisition in conjunction with WLT, Riverkeeper and Yorktown Land Trust.

**Erick Hansen** - 4.2-acre easement, Bedford.

**Bedford Community Church** - 4-acre easement, Bedford

**Town of Yorktown** - 4-acre acquisition in conjunction with WLT, Riverkeeper and Yorktown Land Trust.

**Margaret Stevens** - 3.6-acre easement, Lewisboro.

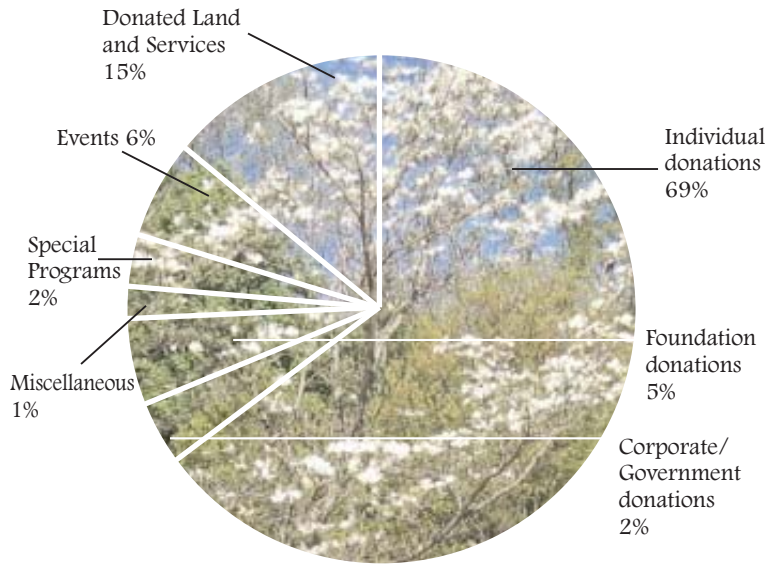
**Carlo Pasqualini** - 2.8-acre easement, Bedford.

**Eugene and Abby Perl** - 1.5 acre easement, Croton-on-Hudson.

# 2005 Revenue & Expenses

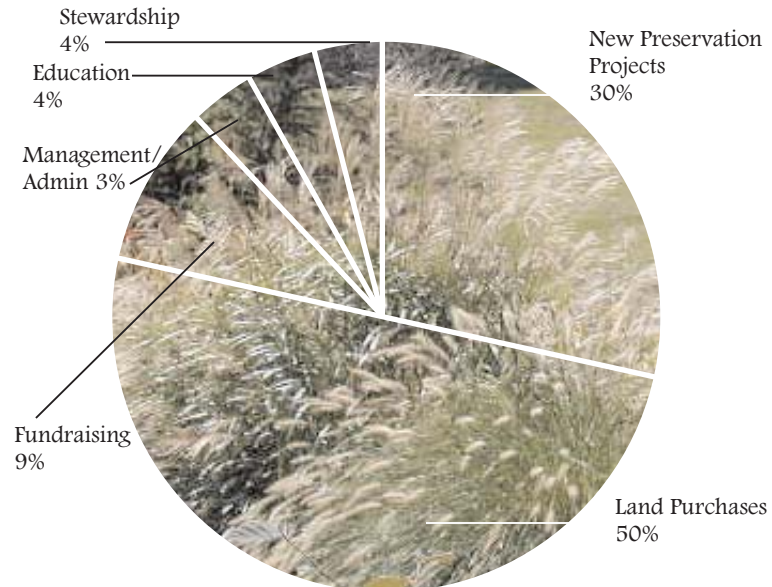
## Revenues

Individual donations	\$550,690
Foundation donations	195,600
Corporate & Government donations	64,138
Events	233,651
Special Programs*	112,565
Miscellaneous	50,619
Donations to purchase or steward land**	2,314,092
Donated Land and Services	636,264
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$4,157,619</b>



## Expenses

New Preservation Projects	705,861
Stewardship	92,120
Education	89,379
Fundraising	219,520
Management/Admin	83,129
Land Purchases	1,212,128
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$2,402,137</b>



\* Special Programs include Westchester Open Space Alliance, Lewisboro Land Trust, Community Land Trust of New Castle, North Castle Coalition, and North Castle Land Trust.

\*\*Funds donated to purchase land includes donations and pledges for Leon Levy Preserve (Lewisboro), Leatherman's Ridge (Bedford), Angle Fly (Somers), Yorktown Acquisition Fund, Glenwood Lake (New Rochelle) and WLT's Capital/Endowment Fund.

# Thank You to our supporters

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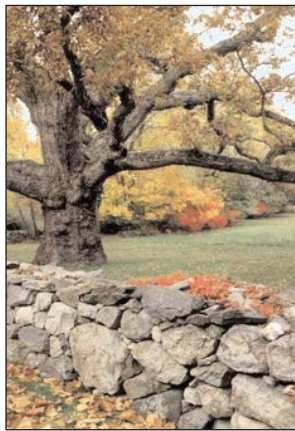
\*Some of the gifts included in this report have been specifically earmarked for chapters of Westchester Land Trust, at the request of the donor, including: Community Land Trust of New Castle, Cortlandt Land Trust, Lewisboro Land Trust, North Castle Coalition, and North Castle Land Trust.

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