

WESTCHESTER LAND TRUST

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

**The year in:
Land Preservation
Land for People
Community Outreach
Farmers' Network
Partners in
Preservation**

Jack Goldberg photo



Contents



Land Preservation: We completed eight projects with 11 partners. p. 4



Land for People: Volunteers helped create new trails. p. 6



Community Outreach: We're advocating for a more sustainable county. p. 8



Farmers Network: We're putting more farmers on more land. p. 10



Partners in Preservation: Land donors and preservation partners. p. 12



Our Mission

Westchester Land Trust conserves land in
partnership with private property owners;
helps communities create new parks
and preserves;
and fosters sound land use planning.



Achieving a better balance

Not a lot of people noticed when the Westchester

County Planning Department released a report in 2010 that listed the amount of protected open space and recreational land in the county at 69,868 acres.

In the late 1990s, when the Planning Department released a similar report, the acreage was 55,400.

In a little over a decade, Westchester's communities added 14,468 acres of protected land.

And how much land was protected over the previous decade? Only one-tenth as much – 1,460 acres.

During the years when only 1,460 acres were being protected, 14,600 acres were developed. But during the years when 14,468 acres were protected, only 11,911 were developed. Clearly something changed.

Across the county, the goal was a better balance between preservation and development and the numbers illustrate our success.

Westchester Land Trust has worked to protect 6,700 acres since 2000, in partnership with local advocates and many levels of government. That includes 216 acres in seven communities in 2010.

In all, we have now protected almost 7,300 acres in 28 communities.

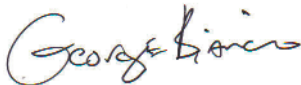
We are proud to have been at the forefront of the land preservation movement, and we think we played a big role.

But most of all we know that just as the countywide accomplishments required the hard work of dozens of land owners, conservation groups, government agencies and others, Westchester Land Trust's accomplishments were not ours alone.

In the short term and over the longer term as well, we will again be looking to all those partners as we keep trying to achieve the balance between land preservation and development that will make our communities better places to live, work, play and go to school.

And so to our land donors, our financial supporters, our collaborators, we'd like send our sincere thanks. And we'd like to add, without a word of exaggeration, that we could not have done it without you.

Sincerely,



George Bianco

Chairman



Candace Schafer

Executive Director

February 2011

More partners, more preservation

For more than a decade, we've been extolling the effectiveness of working with preservation partners. Less is not more when it comes to land preservation – more is more.

Our successes in 2010 prove the point. In a difficult year economically for land preservation, we completed eight projects in seven communities, covering 216 acres of land that is important for watershed protection, hiking and horse-back riding, wildlife habitat,

and scenic views.

On those eight projects, we worked with 11 partners – Bedford and New Castle, The Nature Conservancy, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, a Katonah neighborhood group, the Beaver Dam Sanctuary, the Putnam County Land Trust, a developer, and landowners in Cortlandt, New Rochelle, and Pound Ridge.

That's an extraordinary list, except that when you turn to page 12 and peruse the list of



partners we've worked with over the last decade, you see that it's business as usual.

The year's completed projects include a 47-acre conservation easement on a 77-acre development project. Developer Antonio Velardo received approval to build eight houses on the 30 remaining acres.

We also received a 24-acre easement from The Nature



The Brandywine easement in New Castle, far left, and the Laurel Ledges easement, this page, protect more than 150 acres combined.



WLT has protected 7,266 acres in 28 communities

■ **4,315 acres in conservation easements**

■ **625 acres on preserves we own**

■ **2,326 acres on preserves for which we helped negotiate agreements**

Conservancy on land it was given to sell, across from our Old Church Lane Preserve in Lewisboro. WLT placed a conservation easement on 24 acres with development rights for one house. In Katonah, a group of 29 neighbors donated

funds to WLT which were used to buy 13 acres of watershed land in collaboration with the Town of Bedford and the New York City DEP. The Ridge Road Preserve helps protect the city's Muscoot Reservoir.

All in all, great successes in a tough year – and we could not have done it alone. We send our sincere thanks to all our preservation partners.

We protected land with 11 partners in 2010



Lending a “Helping Hand” to create new trails

We preserve land to protect water

quality, to provide unfragmented habitat for wildlife, and to preserve the beautiful views that help define our communities.

But we also protect land for people – to provide places for walking, hiking, horseback riding and other passive recreational activities.



In 2010 we made progress in our efforts to help make more preserves accessible through our Helping Hands corporate volunteer program. Volunteers from local companies contributed their time and effort to build trails and maintain our preserves.

Teams of workers from Swiss Re, C.W. Brown and Dannon created trails at preserves in Yorktown, Pound Ridge, Armonk and Greenburgh.

Swiss Re participated in two projects, and thanks to the work of over two dozen volun-

Westchester Land Trust has nine preserves with trails open to the public.



Through our Helping Hands program and Nature Quests, we provided hiking opportunities for more families throughout Westchester.

teers, our Hemlock Brook Preserve, in Yorktown, and the Eastwoods Preserve, which we helped the Town of Pound Ridge buy in 2007, now have trails and are open to the public.

C.W. Brown sent volunteers to the Wampus Elementary School in Armonk where they improved the school's nature center and outdoor classroom. Volunteers from Dannon helped create trails at the Taxter Ridge Preserve, in Greenburgh.

We also created a new Nature Quest, at Bedford Audubon's Bylane Farm in Katonah, thanks to the generosity of Jennifer and Roger Schwartz through the Louis and Anne Abrons Family Foundation. We also have Quests at Westchester Wilderness Walk and the Frederick P.



Rose Preserve.

Through these efforts, and in the nine preserves we own that have trails, we have created many new opportunities for families throughout Westchester to get out and enjoy the natural world.

For more information on our Helping Hands program, or to make an appointment for a presentation, please contact Bobbe Stultz at Bobbe@westchester-landtrust.org



Connecting our work to a wider world

While we're busy protecting land, we also like to keep an eye on what's happening in the wider world, study topics that enhance our work, and then present them to the public.

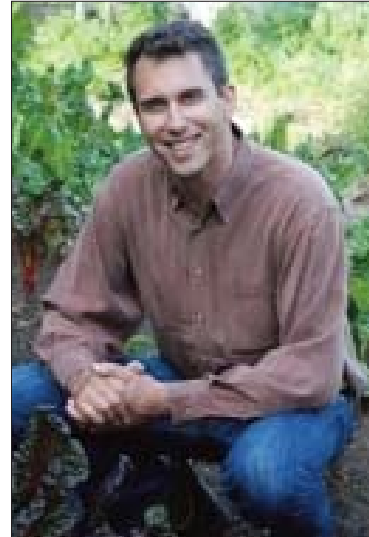
In 1997 we organized a lecture by the distinguished Columbia University historian Kenneth Jackson and shortly afterwards brought in native gardening expert Sara Stein to speak. These were among many educational presentations, conferences and forums WLT has sponsored.

We returned to that tradition in 2010, with our four-part "Food, Land, Sustainability"

Our May conference looked at alternatives to suburban sprawl.

series, which drew large audiences (and rave reviews) to lectures and discussions in Bedford, Tarrytown, South Salem and Bronxville.

Our topics included the Hudson River's role in a sustainable region by John Cronin, director and chief executive officer of the Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries, the connection between land, agriculture and eating by Josh Viertel, president of Slow Food USA, and



the challenges of bringing fresh food to urban areas by Barry Benepe, founder of the New York City Greenmarket. Mr. Benepe's talk was part of our annual Leon Levy Environmental Symposium, which is supported by the Jerome Levy Foundation.

We also brought together four farmers – Lisa Schwartz of Rainbeau Ridge, Mimi Edelman of I & Me Farm, Betsey Ryder of Ryder Farm, and

John Cronin of the Beacon Institute, far left below, Josh Viertel of Slow Food USA, left, and Barry Benepe of the New York Greenmarket, below, were among our speakers.

Bob Stuart of Stuart's Fruit Farm – for a panel discussion of the realities of farming in the suburbs.

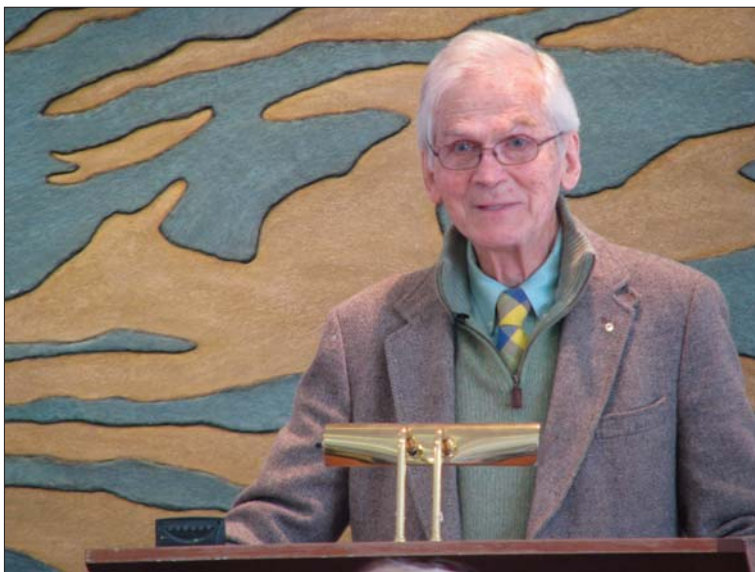
The discussions attracted both long-time supporters interested in new ideas and residents who were familiar with the topics but new to the land trust.

In May we collaborated with the Congress for New Urbanism, CNU New York and the Regional Plan Association to hold a conference in Dobbs

Ferry called **Retrofitting Sprawl: A Guide to Remaking the Suburbs.**

More than 60 people attended and heard presentations on remaking strip developments, smart growth and sustainability.

It was the eighth major conference Westchester Land Trust has organized since 2000, and helped us continue our practice of advocating for better land use planning.



Our 2010 Food, Land, Sustainability Lecture Series included:

■ **John Cronin:**
"The Sustainable Hudson"

■ **Josh Viertel:**
"Slow Food, Good Land"

■ **Barry Benepe:**
"How the Greenmarket Saved the Hudson Valley"

■ **Mimi Edelman, Lisa Schwartz, Bob Stuart, Betsey Ryder:**
"No Farms, No Food/No Farmers, No Food"

A growing network of farm connections

We had an inkling that the Westchester Land

Trust Farmers Network was a good idea when, at the second monthly meeting, with hardly a word of formal publicity, our little meeting room was overflowing with more than 50 people – chefs, farmers, landowners, merchants, farming advocates and others, all of whom were interested in helping make local agriculture more sustainable.

They talked shop, exchanged ideas, discussed tricks of the trade and, perhaps most crucially, made connections at monthly meetings through the winter.

Those connections led to one of the highlights of the Network's first year: our Farmer Match program, which linked farmers who needed land with land owners who were willing to have their land used for agriculture.



In 2010 alone we helped make six matches, including three on land we had protected with conservation easements (and more are in the works for 2011). We've provided details of those matches on the following page.

Working with partners, notably Slow Food Westchester, we organized two events to bring farmers and chefs together: a "speed meeting" at Muscoot Farm in April and a tour of 10 local

We helped match six farmers with people who had land to farm.

Linsay Cochran, far left, was one of about 170 participants in the Westchester Land Trust Farmers Network.



farms in October. The result was that farmers found steady markets for their produce, and chefs found reliable sources of fresh local food.

Farmland protection has been an important part of our land preservation program



since our inception. More than two dozen of our easements protect 600-plus acres of agricultural land.

The Farmers' Network has grown to 170 participants, but the goal is to do more than just bring people together.

It's to help make local farming sustainable for the long term and to protect more farmland in perpetuity.

These farmers and landowners participated in our 2010 Farmer Match program:

- Doug DeCandia (Digger's East) worked on land owned by Ryder Farm, Brewster.
- Mimi Edelman and Eileen Zidi (I & Me Farm) worked on land owned by William Louis-Dreyfus and Bob and Beth Mancini, Bedford.
- Lou D'Alessandro (JD Farms) worked on land owned by William Louis-Dreyfus, Bedford.
- Deb Taft (Mobius Fields) worked on land owned by Stephen and Patricia Beckwith, Lewisboro.
- Louisa Purcell worked on land owned by Peggy Stevens, Lewisboro.
- Alexis Sarandon and Alex Luther worked on land owned by David and Mary Boies, North Castle.

For more information, contact Eileen Hochberg, WLT's director of conservation outreach: Eileen@westchesterlandtrust.org



Revenue & Expenses

(July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010)

Westchester Land Trust continues to provide program services that preserve open space, educate and advocate best land use practice and connect people to the land.

Revenue

Individual donations	\$406,918
Foundation donations	\$59,500
Corporate & Government donations	\$16,007
Special Event, net of expenses	\$274,435
Miscellaneous ¹	\$233,963
<u>Total Operating Income</u>	\$990,823
Special Projects ²	\$15,040
Capital Fund/Endowment	\$73,026

Expenses

Program Services	\$996,908
Fundraising	\$175,679
Management/Admin	\$129,700
<u>Total Operating Expenses</u>	\$1,302,287
Land Purchases	\$253,000
Net Assets (June 30, 2010) ³	\$27,898,721

¹ Includes interest on operating reserves and net rental income.

² Special projects include Lewisboro Land Trust, North Castle Coalition, North Castle Land Trust and Levy Preserve Fund

³ WLT's net assets include real property held for preservation, Sugar Hill Farm, an operating reserve, the capital fund, and other restricted funds. Please visit our website or contact us for a copy of our audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2010.



Land donors, preservation partners

Our sincere thanks to those who generously preserved their land, or contributed time and funds to acquire land, with Westchester Land Trust, and to the many partners who let us help with their preservation projects:

Putnam County Land Trust – a conservation easement protecting the 105-acre Laurel Ledges Preserve in the Great Swamp of Patterson.

Antonio Velardo/Town of New Castle – a 47-acre conservation easement with public trails set aside as part of the Brandywyne subdivision.

The Nature Conservancy/Old Church Lane – a 24-acre conservation easement from The Nature Conservancy on land in Lewisboro given to the Conservancy to be sold to raise funds.

Residents of Ridge Road & Quicks Lane, the Town of Bedford, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection – purchase of 13 acres of watershed protection land in Katonah.

Paul Zofnass & Renee Ring – a 13-acre donation to increase the size of Westchester Wilderness Walk, Pound Ridge.

Terry and Richard Albright – a 9-acre land donation in Cortlandt, near Blue Mountain Reservation and other preserved lands.

Beaver Dam Sanctuary – the transfer of a conservation easement on three acres in Bedford.

Susan Darley – a 2-acre conservation easement in New Rochelle.



Thank You!

**Support for Annual Operations
July 1, 2009 to August 31, 2010**

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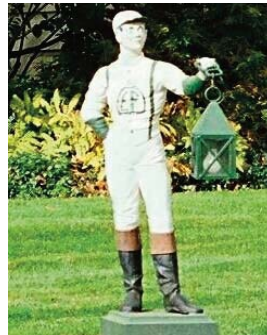
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