

# PECONIC LAND TRUST

CELEBRATING 39 YEARS OF LAND CONSERVATION

Vol. 33, No. 1



Fall 2022



# COMMUNITY



# CONSERVATION

## WORKING TOGETHER

# A Message from our President

With nearly 39 years under our belt, I can't help but reflect on our earliest conservation successes. They truly define who we are as an organization today and our approach of finding win-win solutions to conservation challenges for landowners and communities alike. It is when community conservation began to take hold in our work. What follows is a story worth being retold.

During our infancy in the mid-1980s, along the shoreline of Big Fresh Pond in Southampton, a 1-acre parcel of pristine freshwater wetlands and upland was to be developed. A building permit application had been filed and neighbors were notified and alarmed. The owners, Eduardo and Pola Schijman, soon realized that there was mounting opposition and that an attorney had been retained to fight the development of this special parcel. The Trust was invited to join the litigation, but we declined in order to explore other options. With the help of David Gilmartin, the Schijman's attorney, the purchase of the property was negotiated as a bargain sale.

At the time, the property was appraised at \$125,000, but the Schijman's were willing to sell it to the Trust for \$85,000. The difference between the appraised value and the purchase price constituted a charitable gift to the Schijmans – a win-win for the owners, the Trust, and the community. But we did not have \$85,000! Enter Kurt Billing, a 24-year old neighbor who grew up on the pond, known by the nickname of "Nature" among friends and family. Amazingly, he took out a \$25,000 personal loan to contribute to the cause. Then he helped raise the balance of \$60,000 from other concerned neighbors. The closing happened 36 years ago in December, 1986 and was the first of its kind at the Trust in which neighbors joined together to preserve land.

Kurt, who taught hundreds of local children to swim in Big Fresh Pond, said in a New York Times article from December 28, 1986: "I'm 24, I don't earn a lot, I live and work out here, and it's going to take me a long time to pay that loan off. But I know 40 years from now, when people can still use that lake to fish and teach their kids to swim, I'm going to be glad that I and other people put the effort in at this time."

For Kurt, and many others, the land and the pond represented extraordinary community assets. The property contributed to the health and beauty of the pond as well as the sense of place around it. Kurt's passion ignited the neighborhood to action, and illustrates the power of the connection between land and people. To date, the Trust has completed over 600 projects on the East End and beyond, every one of

them grounded in the connection to, and the love of, the land. Recent examples include the acquisition of sacred land at Sugar Loaf Hill in concert with the Shinnecock Graves Protection Warrior Society and Southampton Town, the protection and restoration of farmland that now hosts working farms in Brentwood with the Sisters of St. Joseph and Suffolk County, and the re-assembly of the Condzella family farm with the help of New York State and many donors in Wading River and beyond.



*Tim Caufiled, Kurt Billing, and John v.H.Halsey in 2006*

In these pages you will learn more about our most recent work, all made possible by you. I invite you to also explore our website – our Interactive Map as well as our Places to Visit pages. You will read some of the conservation stories you've helped write through your support and learn more about the people behind the acres. These stories reflect the connection between land and people in a multitude of ways, and the foundation of community conservation. The Trust is striving to strengthen and celebrate this connection by growing a diverse conservation community, one in which our work is relevant to all. Indeed, this is key to our continued success.

After the Trust's acquisition of the 1-acre shoreline preserve that Kurt made possible, he led the charge to protect over 160 acres in Tuckahoe Woods with the help of Suffolk County, Southampton Town, and the Trust. This is part of the Big Fresh Pond watershed. There is a trail through Tuckahoe Woods that includes a Kurt Billing Loop with a spur that leads to our preserve on Big Fresh Pond. The preserve is now known as Nature's Preserve after being dedicated to Kurt soon after his untimely death in 2009.

But Kurt's inspiration is captured on a memorial rock at Nature's Preserve: "This preserve is dedicated to the memory of Kurt Billing, known by his many friends as 'Nature,' a devoted servant of the land who, with a big smile, tireless energy, generosity, and open heart, made our community a better place. With 'Nature' in mind, we celebrate the Nature he loved." Our work is dedicated to Kurt and all of you who we have the privilege to work with in common cause to conserve what we know and love for generations to come.

JHalsey@PeconicLandTrust.org

## Donor Spotlight | Judy Saner Lends a Hand



After 20-plus years in LA, I decided to move back to the East Coast. I'd visited friends in Bridgehampton over the years and thought it was a perfect place. Near enough to New York City, but very much country. I was captured by the landscape of beautiful open fields, many running down to the ocean. I loved the combination of farming and "luxurious" beach life.

When I settled here in 1996, I became aware of the Trust and decided that it was a place I'd like to volunteer, so I called. My first involvement was – naturally – stuffing envelopes! Eventually, my talents were rendered obsolete by electronic communication methods. Though on occasion, the Trust will find a "special" project for me to handle.

I've also been involved with fundraising on the annual Through Farms & Fields committee. Everything from helping with parking at the first event 19 years ago to choosing table décor in current years. And when we couldn't have an in-person event, I was trusted to use the office paper shredder to create fill for the sponsor baskets!

Whether it's addressing envelopes or tying strings around pine cones for Christmas-ornament-making at Bridge Gardens, I love pitching in with the Trust. What a fun way to meet fellow volunteers with like interests in the community. And we all spend a lot of effort explaining that the Trust is NOT the Community Preservation Fund. Both working for similar goals, but the Trust is privately funded.

It's so frustrating to watch open spaces disappear and I'm grateful for all the Trust does to protect what's left. Over the years, I've learned so much more about what the Trust does – in addition to preserving land, they also operate community gardens, work on water quality, and encourage young farmers. I've gained great respect for the knowledge and expertise of the staff, many of whom I now think of as friends.

So, there was no question that I would include the Trust in my will. Not planning to have that come into being too soon, but when it is...May the good work go on and on forever!

**We are thankful to Judy Saner for sharing her story with us. You can create a lasting legacy like Judy by remembering the Peconic Land Trust in your will.**

*For more information, contact Amanda Abraham, Director of Development at [AAbraham@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:AAbraham@PeconicLandTrust.org). Or you can also volunteer at the Trust! Please contact Kathy Kennedy, Senior Manager of Outreach at [KKennedy@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:KKennedy@PeconicLandTrust.org).*

Extend your impact and become a

# Peconic Partner

Your monthly gift to the Annual Fund helps protect our working farms, natural lands, and heritage. Without your support, our work would not be possible.

*Thank you.*

**Giving is easy!**

**Simply return the enclosed gift envelope or visit us online.**

**[PeconicLandTrust.org/Give](https://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Give)**

**Call us at 631.283.3195 or email us at:**

**[Info@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:Info@PeconicLandTrust.org)**

# Conservation for All Communities



Broad Cove, Riverhead

On the eve of the 40th Anniversary of the Peconic Land Trust, we take time to celebrate all that has been accomplished and acknowledge the support of many throughout these four decades. Truly, without your help, the conservation of working farms, woodlands, hilltops, and shorelines would not have been possible. Throughout, our work has not only focused on the land, but also the people who work the land as well as those who appreciate the importance of protecting it.

Our 40th Anniversary is also a time to reflect on the impact we have had on the health and well-being of the communities we serve across Long Island, and to ask ourselves: How can we better serve the needs of all communities? In addition to providing people with access to woodlands and trails, local farms and fresh food, clean drinking water, wetlands, and bays, what are new ways to engage those with different life experiences than our own? How do we broaden our impact so that we are relevant to one and all? We know that the best way to answer these questions is to listen to, and engage with, those we seek to serve.

We recognize that our conservation successes would not have been possible without the involvement of many people in local communities. Whether we gather neighbors to provide private dollars to match public funds toward the protection of a beloved farm or to fund critical research and remediation to restore our impaired coastal ponds, we have a history of engaging people. Most recently, we have invested funds provided by you to build better trails so that more people can access the land that we have protected. We have also made it possible for Spanish-speaking people to enjoy interpretive signage at preserves in their native language. While we have accomplished a lot to engage the diverse communities around us, there is more work to be done and further questions have to be considered.

## *Who have we left behind?*

Land trusts across the country are talking about Community Conservation. In essence, it is an approach to conservation in which community engagement and the application of the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion are incorporated into every aspect of land conservation. As such, land trusts are acknowledging inequities related to access and are recommitting themselves to conserving not just land but also community access to land and the natural world. In our case, it means working with our indigenous communities to protect and restore ancestral lands for ceremonial and other purposes, increasing access to locally grown food through community gardens and food pantries, expanding access to nature with accessible trails, and providing educational-based activities that connect people to the world around us. These are elements of Community Conservation, and the basis of our efforts to connect and grow a diverse conservation community.

## *What new partnerships does the future hold for the Trust and its staff?*

We are looking forward to building new connections, broadening the scope of our work, and learning from our neighbors how we can be helpful, relevant, and authentic in accomplishing their community's conservation goals.



***We invite you to join the conversation and would love to hear from you.***

Email: [Yvette DeBow-Salsedo at YDebow@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:Yvette.DeBow-Salsedo@PeconicLandTrust.org).



# What is Community Conservation?

1. Respond to community need.
2. Connect people with place.
3. Create opportunities for people to get involved.
4. Energize the community.
5. Provide public access.
6. Broaden the land trust's reach.
7. Provide lasting and meaningful impact.



Source: Land Trust Alliance

## Community Conservation In Action

*Since our founding, the tenets of community conservation have been an integral part of our work. Here are a few of our recent projects that reflect the connection with you - our community:*



### Sugar Loaf Preserve, Shinnecock Hills

Sugar Loaf Hill Summit, sacred land of the Shinnecock people, was protected in July 2021. The Trust is working closely with the Shinnecock Graves Protection Warrior Society to restore the land.

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Shinnecock](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Shinnecock)



### Condzella Farm, Wading River

The Condzella Family has farmed in Wading River for 100 years. Donors from all over the East End worked together to raise funds so the Trust will be able to purchase easements on their land and allow their family farm legacy to continue.

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/WadingRiver](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/WadingRiver)



### Soundview Avenue Preserve, Southold

"I am deeply grateful to the Trust and all the committed people who joined in this effort to protect our fragile and increasingly rare, East End forests." - Isabelle Kanz on the community conservation effort to create the Soundview Avenue Preserve in Southold.

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Soundview](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Soundview)

### Georgica Pond, Wainscott

Located on the corner of Montauk Highway and Wainscott Stone Road in East Hampton, a former commercial property is being transformed into a viable wetlands area for a healthier Georgica Pond. The Trust looks forward to working with both the Town of East Hampton and the Friends of Georgica Pond Foundation with ongoing efforts to reduce storm water run-off into the pond from the nearby roads.



[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/GeorgicaPond](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/GeorgicaPond)

# Discovering Broad Cove

For decades a top conservation priority on the East End, Broad Cove was acquired by the Trust in late 2021. The 100-acre property in Aquebogue includes 25 acres of tidal wetlands and 8,000 feet of shoreline on Terry Creek and Broad Cove in Flanders Bay. The former duck farm, located near the Bell Town Cultural Heritage Area, will eventually be available for hiking and kayaking, while also providing climate change resiliency, wildlife habitat, and water quality protection in this part of the Peconic Bay Estuary. Access to Broad Cove is limited while the Trust works on a management plan for the site.

## Documenting Over 50 Species of Birds with Keith Klein



Greater Yellowlegs,  
photo courtesy of Tyler Mansfield

When spring finally sprung this past year, a small group of birders took to Broad Cove to document migratory birds. From three separate visits, they spotted over 50 different bird species including the rare Broad-Winged Hawk, Bald Eagle, and multiple warblers.

Every year, Keith Klein conducts a survey of migrating spring warblers for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County. After the Trust's purchase of Broad Cove, he reached out to conduct his survey.

Including 25 acres of tidal wetlands and 8,000 feet of shoreline, the site was found to be an important stopover for migrating birds and great habitat for local breeders!



Lesser Yellowlegs,  
photo courtesy of Tyler Mansfield

For more information about our preserves, contact Matt Swain, Director of Stewardship and Geographic Information Systems at [MSwain@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:MSwain@PeconicLandTrust.org). To learn about the research being conducted at Broad Cove, contact Jessie McSwane, Senior Stewardship Manager, at [JMcSwane@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:JMcSwane@PeconicLandTrust.org), or Josh Halsey, Environmental Programs Manager, at [JoshHalsey@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:JoshHalsey@PeconicLandTrust.org).

## Partnering on Plant Species Management

The Trust welcomed Long Island Invasive Species Management Area (LIISMA) and Peconic Estuary Partnership (PEP) to Broad Cove in August. Staff from all three



Close Up of Native *Opuntia humifusa*, also known as Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus

organizations conducted an invasive species assessment.

While walking three miles over the property, the team passed through many micro habitats, tidal wetlands, woodlands, and open meadows. Data collected during the assessment will be used in the site's invasive species control and inform techniques to improve land management. More information and resources to come!

### Finding highlights:

- Evidence of emerging **invasive** *Ailanthus altissima* (Tree of Heaven)
- Stand of **invasive** knotweed in one isolated location
- Controllable **invasive** thistle infestation on edge of forest
- Meadow of **native** *Opuntia humifusa* (Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus)
- Meadow of **native** *Apocynum cannabinum* (Indian Hemp)

To learn more about the preserve, visit [www.PeconicLandTrust.org/BroadCove](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/BroadCove).

Thank you to our friends and partners at LIISMA and PEP. We are so very appreciative of your efforts and collaboration. And thank you to our donors — **You help make our work possible.**

# Meet the Next Generation

## Alexandra Bova: Documenting Native Species

Have you ever pictured spending your summer hiking around the woods in a hooded Tyvek suit? Our Stewardship Intern, Alexandra Bova, a senior at Marist College, did just that. She spent countless hours in the field at Broad Cove in Aquebogue and the Wolf and Reese Preserves in Southold to document native species. The suit helped decrease her contact with ticks and increase her time in the tall grasses beyond the trails.

Spending 2 to 3 days a week in the field, Alexandra identified, photographed, and noted native and non-native plant and animal species at the Trust properties. The other days of the week were spent back at the computer compiling her data. This information will be used in the Trust's management plans for the properties.

Returning to campus this Fall, she'll take her field work experience to the classroom, and 3 credits for 135 hours of work. Studying Environmental Science and Policy, she hopes to enter the conservation field after graduation. When asked what most surprised her about the Trust,

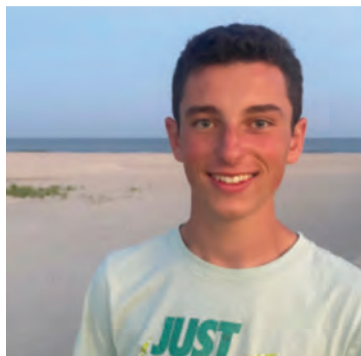


it was the scope of the work. "I had learned about environmental easements in an environmental planning course, but didn't know all the other aspects of land conservation and stewardship that was involved."

*Thank you for all of your hard work Alexandra!  
Good luck with your next semester!*

## Miller Goldsmith: Listening to Farmers Stories

This summer was a full circle moment for Miller Goldsmith, a rising high school senior. During his internship with the Trust, he met and talked with farmers whose farm stands he has visited since he was little. "I have memories of visiting the Milk Pail farm stand in Water Mill every summer and now I got to sit down and talk with Jenn (Halsey Dupree) about her farm." He even spent time setting up the Trust's Through Farms and Fields event at the Halsey's Whitecap Farm.



Throughout the summer, Miller conducted site visits to identify the different kinds of agriculture happening on the South Fork. He also met with farmers to discuss their trials and successes of farming on protected and unprotected farmland. What was supposed to be a 20-minute conversation often turned into 1 to 2 hours



*Apples at Whitecap Farm*

of walking around each farm and learning their history. Afterwards, he summarized each meeting into a two-page report. The information gathered will be used in the final farmland report the Trust is preparing for the Town of Southampton.

A theme often repeated in the meetings, from equestrian to sod to fruit and vegetable farming, was the need for deer fencing, the challenges of moving equipment around in traffic, and adapting to market demands to be economically viable on Long Island. "Each farmer I spoke with appreciated the Trust's role and significance in agriculture."

*Thank you for sharing the stories you collected Miller! Enjoy your senior year!*

*Do you know a high school or college student interested in a conservation based internship? Please have them send a resume and brief cover letter to Senior Office Manager Robin Harris at [RHarris@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:RHarris@PeconicLandTrust.org).*

# Sagg Pond Watershed Update



**A**fter three years of research that you helped fund, we're moving into a remediation phase with Sagg Pond. The Trust and partners including Cornell Cooperative Extension, SUNY Stony Brook, Southampton Town, Town Trustees, and inspired residents are working together to remove harmful nutrients from the groundwater entering the pond.

## Why Sagg Pond?

- There is a serious pollution problem. Sagg Pond has 2 to 16 times the nitrogen concentration acceptable for coastal ponds resulting in the presence of blue-green algae during the summer months. This poses a risk to wildlife, domestic pets, and humans.
- The size and shape of Sagg Pond is unique. The long shorelines and shallow water when the pond is open to the ocean draws groundwater into the pond at high rates.
- Sandy soils beneath homes, lawns, and fields within the Sagg Pond watershed are susceptible to leaching excessive amounts of nutrients like nitrogen into the groundwater.
- Land use surrounding the pond is primarily residential and agricultural. With landowner action and cooperation, we can restore the pond.

## The Good News

It's not too late by any means. There's hope that the changes made now within the Sagg Pond watershed will help to restore water quality for the future!

### Ways you can help improve and restore Sagg Pond

- **Meet with Bruce.** Email Bruce Horwith, the Trust's Natural Resource Consultant, for free, confidential, at-home consultations on best management practices within the watershed at: [bruce.horwith@gmail.com](mailto:bruce.horwith@gmail.com).
- **Do your part.** Upgrade your septic system, practice sustainable lawn care, install vegetative buffers along the shoreline.
- **Provide access.** Provide access to Cornell Cooperative Extension in key shoreline areas for test wells and permeable reactive barriers (PRBs) to capture nitrogen before it enters the pond.
- **Support restoration efforts.** Contribute private funds to secure public funding matches from Southampton Town's Community Preservation Fund. To date, the Town has matched 100% of the private funds we've raised for specific projects doubling the impact of your gifts.
- **Stay informed.** Watch our online presentations on research and remediation efforts and progress. Past recordings can be found on our website,

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/SaggPond](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/SaggPond)

*The size of the pond and the opportunity to have an impact is very encouraging. What has brought us this far is tremendous support from the community and from the Town. – John v.H. Halsey*

*Have questions, or would like to make a gift in support of the pond's restoration? Contact Amanda Abraham, Director of Development at [AAbraham@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:AAbraham@PeconicLandTrust.org).*





# Celebrating Conservation: Deep Hole Creek



*Russ McCall, owner of McCall Wines and longtime supporter of the Trust*

On August 21st, the supporters of the Deep Hole Creek conservation project gathered at McCall Wines in Cutchogue to celebrate the acquisition and protection of this 14.94-acre property.

A huge thank you to Russ McCall, Nicola Plimpton, and the entire McCall family and tasting room staff for generously hosting

us! In his remarks on the importance of community conservation, Russ McCall said it best: We're all here because of the places that make the North Fork so special, and it's on us to protect them. It's not just the beauty of our natural lands, our working farms, or our local history and heritage that make the North Fork special, it's the people — all of you!

The property, which we refer to as the Deep Hole Creek parcel, was the subject of a fundraising campaign by the Trust. Over 115 donors supported the farmland and open space conservation. It was through this community fundraising effort that the Town of Southold agreed to partner with the Koehler Family, the Trust, and community by purchasing the farmland's development rights.

Because so many people in the community cared, another piece of the North Fork remains protected, forever.

**We are so grateful to the donors and volunteers who supported this project, for the Koehler family for choosing a conservation option, and for our partners in Southold Town for making this a conservation success.**

The next step for the Deep Hole Creek property is to find a conservation buyer to acquire and care for it in the future. A request for proposals was issued in October.



*Members of the Deep Hole Creek Steering Committee*

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/DHC](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/DHC)

To learn more about this project, contact Holly Sanford, Senior Project Manager at [HSanford@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:HSanford@PeconicLandTrust.org) or Alison Delaney, Development Officer at [ADelaney@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:ADelaney@PeconicLandTrust.org).

## Farms for the Future Farm Stand Opens

Did you visit our Farms for the Future Farm Stand this past summer and fall?

The stand at the Agricultural Center at Charnews Farm is the first in our 14-year history of the Farms for the Future Initiative. It was made possible through the support of a generous donor. Farmers in our incubator program now have a seasonal retail space to sell their products.

***Having retail opportunities are an important step to making farming a financially viable career.***

Participating farmers included Fire for Effect Farm, Fishtail Farm, Hampton Oyster Company, Heirloom Taste, Priscilla's Farm, and Sweet Woodland Farm. Available products included a variety of vegetables,



flowers, plants, herbal products, and oysters. Look for the stand again this Spring!

***All of the participating farms produced and/or processed at Charnews Farms.***

To learn more about what is growing at the Ag Center, contact Jessie McSwane, Senior Stewardship Manager at [JMcSwane@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:JMcSwane@PeconicLandTrust.org).

# Season Reflections from the Field

## A Note from Farm Manager Madison Aldrich



*Madison, Layton, Claire and Sarah  
(The Crew at Quail Hill Farm)*

I started at Quail Hill Farm (QHF) in 2020 as an apprentice, fascinated with farming and eager to learn, and two years later (just this spring!) I became the Farm Manager. Coming into the season I felt nervous: Quail Hill is an institution and in being part of leadership, I did not take that responsibility lightly. Being an apprentice at Quail Hill Farm and growing up out here in this community gave me a clear picture of how the farm needed to be led. The purpose of the apprenticeship is to create a space where young farmers can develop farm management skills, and I feel honored to have been given the opportunity to see that through at the very place that planted the seed for me. I view Quail Hill as having three main principles: Community, Education, and Production, each of which supports the other and needs to be nurtured properly. On a “normal” production farm, one’s to-do list for the week may include tasks like weed the carrots, irrigate the lettuce, harvest the beans, etc. At Quail Hill, we do all of our production tasks in addition to other education and community-centered projects.

As farm manager, I am constantly faced with the question: How do I make time for all these principles that are equally important to us as well as the Quail Hill community?

How does one sacrifice that bed of eggplant that desperately needs to be weeded, for an educational moment in training an apprentice to use the transplanter implement? How do we make time to mow the orchard for the Potluck when the brussel sprouts need to be sown?



These are the types of choices we face throughout the season.

As the season winds down, I feel tired. There’s a lot to unpack, and I feel overwhelmed in thinking about all the things that we could’ve done differently. But then I remember our triumphs! We are paving the way here in rewriting the narrative on a historically exploitative field. Farm workers can be happy and healthy and have pride in their work. They can learn and be invested in. We can grow an amazing melon crop and go home after work with enough energy and time to enjoy the rest of our lives. These social aspects are all part of a healthy food system that you help support. Overall, we grew a ton of food and fed a bunch of people.

Running the farm is a balancing act, and October has felt like we found balance. Apprentices are learning weekly with educational workshops, were moving through our task lists in a sustainable way and Birch Hill has a lot of food to pick from! It’s especially gratifying for me at this moment because of how well our crew is doing. They’re autonomous in the work and know how to manage themselves. This is what I’ve been working towards this season, and I’m savoring the moment.

I’m still figuring it out, how to uphold all these priorities at once. I feel peaceful knowing the winter holds plenty of time to plan for next.

As the farm manager at Quail Hill, I’ve learned to measure our success not just on how productive and weed-free our fields look, but also on the overall health of the workplace. I want to thank Layton for their mentorship and the ways in which they have supported me. And I want to thank our farm members for a successful season, you’ve supported countless young apprentices but also a now fully realized farm manager.



[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/QuailHillFarm](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/QuailHillFarm)

To learn more about Quail Hill Farm, contact Layton Guenther, Farm Director at [LGuenther@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:LGuenther@PeconicLandTrust.org).

# 15 Years and Growing Strong

## Moving Forward with a Master Plan



The past 15 years have been busy for Bridge Gardens. With your support, we created the vegetable and community gardens and made growing food and edible landscaping an important part of who we are. We adopted low impact, sustainable gardening, lawn, and landscaping practices and, through our programs, encouraged others to do so. We added hundreds of native trees, shrubs, perennials, and grasses, so all visitors can appreciate the beauty of these plants and learn how important they are for birds, pollinators and other wildlife. Knowing of your commitment to our fragile environment, we developed a master plan that features natural habitat gardens that will foster the rewilding of the East End. Through our varied and extensive programs, we made education and engagement with the public important goals and became a community resource for the East End and greater Long Island. Bridge Gardens became a public

garden, a local park, a destination from one end of the Island to the other, open every day with free admission, where people, can visit, enjoy, and learn.

In the future, your continued support of Bridge Gardens and the Peconic Land Trust will

enable us to continue to fulfill our mission, and with renovation of the garden house, become even more accessible and accommodating for all. We want Bridge Gardens to become the Trust's education center on the South Fork, a place where visitors can learn about the Trust and all its good work and why it's important to us all, a place where the Trust and Bridge Gardens can host meetings, lectures and conferences and a place to learn about important environmental issues as well as sustainable gardening and landscaping.

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/BridgeGardens](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/BridgeGardens)

Have more questions about the future of Bridge Gardens? Email Garden Director Rick Bogusch at [RBogusch@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:RBogusch@PeconicLandTrust.org).



Susan D'Alessio, Bridge Gardens Community Gardener  
Photo courtesy of Ellen Diamante

## Working Together

"Looking back at the season, one of its great pleasures was working with Ella Snow from the Bridgehampton Childcare and Recreation Center to bring after-school and summer camp classes to Bridge Gardens. Whether we picked and ate apples or learned how to use a scuffle-hoe or to plant tomato seedlings or rolled down the hill, we always had a good time. Thanks to a generous donor, Bridge Gardens is also working with Ella and the Center to develop an intergenerational gardening program, involving local teens and elders. Next year, we hope to expand and improve this year's pilot program."

— Garden Director, Rick Bogusch



Thank you Ella and everyone we met this Summer at Bridgehampton Childcare and Recreation Center.

# Connecting with You Through the Year



What an exciting year, the first full year offering in-person programming and social connections following the challenges of the pandemic. You were ready for it – and so were your neighbors! Our Connections programs filled up quickly and were often oversold to ensure

that as many people as possible could re-connect with friends, neighbors, and the Trust. Whether it was a woodland hike, a kayak paddle, a visit to a local farm, a gardening or bat box building workshop – you turned out. We hosted nearly 60 unique activities and partnered with over 20 local organizations to offer as many opportunities as possible for you to explore nature, meet new people, and enjoy the natural communities that you have helped protect.

Looking ahead to 2023, and our 40th anniversary year, our theme will be “40 for 40” with a focus on bringing you to 40 places whose conservation has had an impact – whether it be our very first, our largest, the one that had the biggest impact on a community, or the most delicate natural community, each one has a story. I hope you will come out again and help us celebrate our conservation accomplishments over these 40 years, made possible through your support and the support of your neighbors.



*Senior Outreach Manager,  
Kathy Kennedy*

*We look forward to seeing and celebrating with you in 2023!*



# Empowering the Tiller and the Pen



This past Fall, the Trust was pleased to partner with [Herstory Writers Workshop](#) in the creation of a four-part writer's workshop. The series was set in various preserves where writers were invited to reflect on the interconnectedness of nature, renewal, agriculture and food insecurity, social justice, and access for all.

We are privileged to share with you the following excerpt from participant, Frank Calderale:



*Frank and Jeannie Calderale*

On September 10 the Peconic Land Trust partnered with Herstory to conduct the Equitable Earth: Writing for Equal Access, Protection and Preservation Writers Workshop. Bridge Gardens in Bridgehampton provided the setting for our first meeting. Five acres of beautifully cultivated botanical gardens formed the backdrop where writers came to discuss and to contemplate the value nature plays in their own designs.

The second workshop was held at the Quail Hill Farm in Amagansett; where, I was reminded of the affect the preservation of farmland and the practices of sustainable agriculture have had upon us. Such practices aide in the protection of indigenous traditions and the continuation of Long Island's farmland heritage. In a society where more than eighty percent of the population lives in urban environments, a vital need is served by those who preserve and conserve our lands.

The preservation of land and our agricultural traditions promote values respecting environmental concerns

benefiting people of all ages. This is quite evident in the community garden concept. On Young's Avenue in Southold, the Charnews Farm is a stellar hallmark of the integral role played by the Peconic Land Trust's efforts to connect the community to its philosophical precepts: a credo maintaining that sound conservation practices work best when those who till the soil are vested in it.

Many North Forkers flock to this site to experience the benefits that come from tilling the earth. Tending the soil is a slow, laborious, and tedious process. Patience and perseverance are skills cultivated by those who heed the rhythms entwined in nature. These skills when passed on can reverberate generationally, ensuring that core planetary values continue to preserve the legacy of our need to nurture what will nurture us.

*To read Frank's essay in its entirety, please visit our website at [www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Herstory](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Herstory).*

*We are so grateful to you Frank for sharing your eloquent thoughts with us.*

*Thank you.*

*Would you like to share your own conservation story? We would love to hear from you. Please reach out to Kathy Kennedy, Senior Manager of Outreach at [KKennedy@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:KKennedy@PeconicLandTrust.org).*

## And They Called It Red Gold

The morning of November 5th dawned sunny and unusually warm at a balmy 66 degrees. It was the perfect weather for the Trust's guided trail walk at the Riverhead cranberry bog with naturalist John Turner. Part of Suffolk County's parks system, the 165-acre Cranberry Bog Nature Preserve is located off Lake Avenue. Although we were all interested in finding cranberries, we learned that they are scarce these days and are certainly not to be found along the trails.

We also learned from John that he knew a lot about the history of cranberries! Farming for cranberries started on the East Coast around 1820 in the Cape Cod area of Massachusetts where watery bogs were prevalent. Land that was regularly underwater was the perfect growing conditions for these low-mounding plants. Farming cranberries provided a steady source of employment for many people.

By the late 1800s, dozens of cranberry farms were operating on Long Island because the environment of the Long Island Pine Barrens perfectly suited their needs. The Woodhull, Brown, and Davis bogs were the largest and biggest source for cranberries grown on Long Island, and the Peconic River played a major role in providing water to the bogs. This was



*Naturalist John Turner*

facilitated by the creation of trenches to move water to the cranberries during dry periods. Harvesting cranberries was a labor-intensive endeavor, and the Long Island industry did not have the economies of scale of cranberry operations in New Jersey and Massachusetts.

Unfortunately, by the late 1970's, cranberry farming on Long Island was a thing of the past.

**To read more about what other discoveries were made on the trail that day, visit our website at [www.PeconicLandTrust.org/TheyCalledItRedGold](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/TheyCalledItRedGold).**

*To learn more about Connections programs and how to get involved, contact Senior Manager of Outreach Kathy Kennedy at [KKennedy@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:KKennedy@PeconicLandTrust.org).*

## New Trail Opens at Reese Preserve

The Harold A. Reese Preserve in Southold is now open to hikers. This summer a 1/2-mile trail connecting the preserve to the adjacent Wolf Preserve trail network was completed. Passing through woodlands and along wetlands, you can go from North Bayview Road to Bayview Road.

Acknowledging that people with mobility restrictions have a hard time enjoying the outdoors, the Trust designed the trails to remove some of the barriers to access. All trails have been widened to six feet to accommodate wheelchairs and strollers and leveled to maintain an approximate grade of 0-3%.

New kiosk signs at both trailheads feature an updated trail map and information in both English and Spanish. We're planning to add more informational signs along the trails to help you discover the species and history of the Great Hog Neck Peninsula. Also, the stewardship



department maintains four native plant nurseries for future native plantings at the preserves. In addition to the 600 plants added last Spring, more were added to the two preserves this Fall.

***Help us to continue to improve the trail system at the Wolf and Reese Preserves.***

The Trust is currently fundraising to improve accessibility features. We're grateful to the generous support of the preserves' neighbors and friends who have made this work possible so far!

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/ReesePreserve](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/ReesePreserve)

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/WolfPreserve](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/WolfPreserve)

*For more information, contact Matt Swain, Director of Stewardship and Geographic Information Systems at [MSwain@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:MSwain@PeconicLandTrust.org), or Amanda Abraham, Director of Development at [AAbraham@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:AAbraham@PeconicLandTrust.org).*

Together Again at  
**Through Farms & Fields**  
August 7, 2022



*On August 7th, 2022, after two years of missing one another, we finally had the chance to celebrate together in person. It was a glorious, sunny day at one of our favorite locations, Whitecap Farm, hosted by the Halsey family. We are so grateful to the Halseys, our sponsors, our donors, and to all our supporters. Without you, we wouldn't be able to protect the places we know and love.*

**Thank you.**

*Join us in 2023 as we celebrate the Trust's 40th Anniversary!*

[www.PeconicLandTrust.org/TFF2023](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/TFF2023)

**Save the Date - August 6, 2023**

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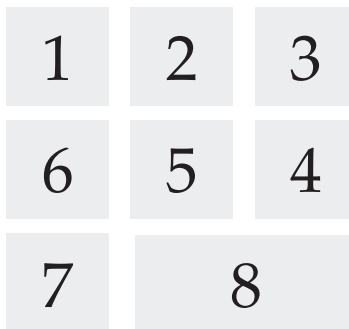


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Lists created on November 1, 2022

**Cover Images**



1. Strawberries from Condzella Farms, Wading River
2. Beach Seining, Hampton Bays
3. Flowers, Quail Hill Farm, Amagansett
4. Kayaking, Goose Creek, East Hampton
5. Planting Tomatoes, Bridge Gardens, Bridgehampton
6. Hiking Laurel Valley, Sag Harbor
7. Hampton Oyster Company at Shellfisher Preserve, Southold
8. Through Farms and Fields, Bridgehampton - with members of the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Shinnecock Graves Protection Warrior Society

# PECONIC LAND TRUST



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The Peconic Land Trust conserves Long Island's working farms, natural lands, and heritage for our communities now and in the future.

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## Did You Know ?

While many believe that the funds raised by the 2% real estate transfer tax go to Peconic Land Trust for its conservation programs, *this is incorrect!*

The Peconic Land Trust raises the vast majority of its funds through private donations.  
Thank you for your support!

*The 2% real estate transfer tax paid by buyers goes directly to the Town in which the property purchased is located.*