



## Trust Receives a Once-in-a-Lifetime Gift: Bridge Gardens



**T**ucked away on Mitchells Lane in Bridgehampton is an idyllic garden oasis, lovingly cultivated over the past 20-plus years by two remarkable men: Jim Kilpatric and

Harry Neyens. Bridge Gardens, under the stewardship of Kilpatric and Neyens, has become a must-see for garden enthusiasts visiting the East End each year.

On September 30, 2008, with an eye toward the future, Kilpatric and Neyens donated Bridge Gardens to the Peconic Land Trust. The five-acre garden is now under the stewardship of the Trust, which will work to maintain and grow Bridge Gardens while providing public access to the property and a host of programs that will cultivate future generations of gardeners and conservationists.

“Bridge Gardens is truly a wonderful sanctuary here on the East End, and we are very honored that Jim and Harry have put their trust in us to steward the property. We intend to keep Jim and Harry engaged with us as the garden evolves and as we work to expand public access to this hidden treasure,” said John v.H. Halsey, President of the Trust.

### Garden Dynamics

For Neyens and Kilpatric, the birth and development of the Gardens has been a true labor of love. For more than 20 years, the two men have planted, assembled, disassembled and rearranged the garden, a dynamic expression of nature and attention to detail.



Neyens and Kilpatric first came to the East End in the late 1970s, when they purchased a second home in Bridgehampton. They started a vegetable garden, which by its second season produced more than they could use or give away. From there, they shifted their gardening



*Article continued on page 6*

## President's Letter

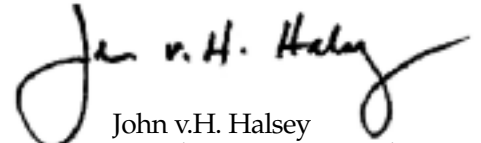
Notwithstanding the economic volatility that we have all experienced beginning this past Fall, the year 2008 was a very good one for the Peconic Land Trust and conservation, as this newsletter certainly chronicles. We are, however, mindful that 2009 will be very challenging and, as an organization, we are looking very closely at how we adapt to these changing times and economize to the greatest extent possible. It is during times like these that the importance of community transcends our normal everyday lives. Clearly, we need to provide a helping hand to those who need it and also strengthen the bonds among us.

As has always been the case with the Trust, we will continue, with your support, to protect community assets that feed us, inspire us, and restore us... the working farms, waterfronts, trails, and vistas that bind our communities together. We will continue to connect people to

the land, resources, and community assets that make Long Island the unique home and destination that it is. During this time of change, we will also continue to press for legislative reforms at all levels of government that further conservation. Thanks again for underwriting our efforts... we couldn't do it without you! ■



*John v.H. Halsey and  
Trust Vice President Tim Caufield*

  
John v.H. Halsey  
President, Peconic Land Trust

## Public Policy Update

In 2008, the Peconic Land Trust continued to work with local, state, and federal representatives on land protection issues for our communities, including:

- Participation on the Senator LaValle and Assemblyman Thiele's advisory committee for the **Community Preservation Fund**;
- Lobbying with other New York State land trusts in Albany for state-wide initiatives including: the **Bigger Better Bottle Bill** (which would extend bottle deposits to water and juice products), protecting the funding of the **Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)** and the **Conservation Partnership Program** (which provides grants for land trusts and community conservation organizations), and passing a corrections bill (subsequently vetoed by the Governor) to fix an error in the drafting of the **Conservation Easement Tax Credit**;
- Lobbying in Washington with land trusts nationwide to extend the enhanced **conservation easement tax deduction** (which was included in the final **Farm Bill**) and push for federal **Estate Tax deferral legislation** for land of conservation value—a program the Peconic Land Trust has been working on for years with our local Congressman, and legislative champion, Tim Bishop.

### On the Horizon for 2009

While the economic environment remains in flux, the Trust is continuing its work with our federal legislators, land trusts across the country, and partner organizations to make permanent the enhanced conservation easement tax deduction, as well as working with Congressman Bishop on legislation that would defer federal Estate Taxes for property of conservation value.



*Peri Grandone, John v.H. Halsey, Marilee Foster,  
Congressman Tim Bishop, and Julie Zaykowski*

On the State level, during the first quarter of 2009, the Trust will be actively working to:

- Protect funding for the **EPF**—which is currently under threat of significant cuts from both FY 2008-09 Deficit Reduction Bill and the FY 2009-10 Executive Budget Proposal; as well as again lobbying for the corrections bill for the Conservation Easement Tax Credit;
- Protect funding for the **Farmland Protection Program**—which is also facing significant cuts of between 33 and 40 percent; and
- Support the **Bigger Better Bottle Bill** legislation—support of which continues to grow within the State Senate and Assembly. The revenues from this bill would provide significant funding for the EPF.

If you would like to learn more about these, or other public policy issues affecting land conservation in our communities, please contact Julie Zaykowski at 631.283.3195 or [jzaykowski@peconiclandtrust.org](mailto:jzaykowski@peconiclandtrust.org). Additional information on public policy and tax issues can be found on our website, [www.PeconicLandTrust.org](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org); and be sure to join our eNewsletter mailing list for updates. ■



# Conservation Accomplishments: 2008

In 2008, the Peconic Land Trust—working with landowners, partner organizations and the Towns of East Hampton, Southampton, Southold and Riverhead, as well as Suffolk County—assisted in the conservation of almost 750 additional acres of land, representing 32 separate projects, and ranging from gardens to orchards, woodland and farmland.

## Walley/Wallschlaeger

In early January, the Town of Southampton and the Village of Quogue acquired a ½ acre property from the Walley/Wallschlaeger family in the heart of the Village with the assistance of the Trust. This parcel adds to the Village's existing green space on Jessup Avenue, and the quaint cottage on the site is now the home of the Quogue Village Historical Society.

## Mothersill Easement

Mary Mothersill's dream of permanently protecting the architectural integrity of her Andrew Geller-designed home and the many specimen trees and shrubs artfully arranged throughout her property in Bridgehampton came to fruition with the generous donation of this iconic property to the Trust in January. These features, along with masses of iris and other perennial flowers, are permanently protected with



a conservation easement placed over the land by the Trust prior to the conveyance of the land to a conservation buyer in October 2008.

## Wilson's Grove Preserve

In February, the Trust accepted a very generous gift of the Wilson's Grove Preserve, donated to the Trust by Marillyn Wilson. Located in East Hampton, this 45.65-acre woodland gem includes Ms. Wilson's architecturally distinctive home and features a magnificent stand of Eastern white pine, woodland gardens and natural habitat for fox, deer, wild turkey and a multitude of birds and other woodland creatures.



## Barker Farmland

Also in February, Leslie Barker successfully conserved nearly 33 acres of rolling farmland in Southampton with a sale of the development rights to the Town of Southampton. The Trust assisted Ms. Barker through the acquisition process and identified the prime agricultural soils to be conserved as well as an appropriate location for a future equity lot.

## Charnews Farm Preserve

The Charnews family of Southold was determined to see the fertile soils of their family farm conserved for future generations, and in early April sold this 23+ acre farm to the Trust. The property includes a homestead, barn and outbuildings. The Trust subsequently sold the development rights on 21 acres to the Town of Southold through the Town's Farmland Protection Program.



## Folks Preserve

The Trust partnered with the Town of Southampton in late April in the first part of a three-part conservation plan with the Folks family. The family sold the development rights to the Town from one of their three, 1.5-acre building lots which adjoin an agricultural reserve, and the Trust purchased the lot. The Trust then leased the land to the farmer who is actively cultivating the existing reserve, in support of their roadside farmstand. It is hoped that the remaining two lots will be conserved in a similar manner over the coming years, thereby assuring that the land remains in active production.



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### Schleicher Farm Preserve

At the end of July, the Trust was very pleased to receive a 20.1-acre farm parcel in Bridgehampton, generously donated by Barrett Schleicher. The Town had previously purchased the development rights on 80% of the parcel. Mr. Schleicher retained two lots with frontage on Kellis Pond. The Trust is leasing the land to a local farmer to ensure that it remains actively cultivated.



### Amagansett Farmers Market

The Trust worked closely with the Struk family and the Town of East Hampton over the course of several years to develop a plan to permanently conserve this important community asset. In July, the project came to fruition when conservation buyer Margaret deCuevas purchased the 9+ acre market and sold development rights on 7.5 acres of farmland to East Hampton Town. The Trust is currently leasing the market and the adjacent farmland from Ms. deCuevas. Re-opening the market for the community, and promoting local agriculture was a high priority, so the Trust contracted with Eli Zabar to operate the market with a focus on local and regional food production. The Amagansett Farmers Market remains a work in progress, and the Trust looks forward to the future.



### Bridge Gardens

As September drew to a close, Harry Neyens and Jim Kilpatric accomplished their goal of permanently protecting their beautiful, 5-acre garden by donating the property to the Trust. With an interest in expanding public access to this sanctuary, the Trust plans to introduce a variety of educational programming related to gar-



dening and conservation at the site, and has hired Rick Bogusch, gardener and landscape architect, to manage and maintain the grounds and education center (*see related article, cover*).

### Sokolin-Densen Preserve

In late November, the Trust accepted the generous donation of a half-acre parcel in the Springs area of East Hampton featuring beach frontage on Accabonac Harbor from the Sokolin-Densen family. The Trust immediately gifted the land to the Town of East Hampton, thereby providing additional beach access to Town residents and working bay-men and women.

### Hubbard "G" Preserve

Also in late November, the Hubbard family furthered their legacy of conserving farmland on the North Fork with the generous gift of a 7.5-acre parcel of preserved farmland in Southold to the Trust. This donation brings the number of conserved parcels donated by the Hubbards—all of them along the Rt 48 corridor in Southold and all of them gifted to the Trust—to a total of seven, representing 25 acres. Prior to gifting them to the Trust, the Hubbards generously donated development rights easements on all seven parcels to the Town of Southold.





### Richter's Orchard

In early December, the Trust joined with officials from Suffolk County and Huntington Town to celebrate the purchase of development rights from the 16-acre Richter's Orchard, now in its 108th year, owned and operated by the Amsler Family. The Trust was pleased to have assisted Evelyn Amsler and her three sons in their efforts to conserve this historically significant fruit farm. ■



Photo – left to right  
 John v.H. Halsey, Councilman Stuart Besen, Huntington Town Supervisor  
 Frank Petrone, County Executive Steve Levy, Evelyn Amsler, Louis Amsler

**In addition to the projects outlined above, the Peconic Land Trust assisted landowners and the Towns of Southold and Riverhead with the following acquisitions:**

#### *Town of Southold:*

Landowner	Acreage	Type	Closing	Use
Wesnofske	6.01	Town Purchase of Development Rights	12-08	Farmland
Ficner	6.54	Town Purchase of Development Rights	11-08	Farmland
Sepenoski	45.24	Town Purchase of Development Rights	11-08	Farmland
Charnews	21.04	Town Purchase of Development Rights	06-08	Farmland
Paradise Point Holding Co.	21.91	Town Acquisition	06-08	Open Space
Blocker	45.03	Town Acquisition with County	05-08	Open Space
Bittner	57.06	Town Acquisition with County	04-08	Open Space
Stackler	35.42	Town Acquisition	04-08	Open Space
Milazzo	12.59	County Acquisition	01-08	Open Space

#### *Town of Riverhead:*

Landowner	Acreage	Type	Closing	Use
Siemenski	49.32	County Purchase of Development Rights	12-08	Farmland
Kobylenski	41.30	Town Acquisition	11-08	Open Space
PF & E Associates	22.00	Town Development Rights with County	10-08	Farmland
Warner	60.00	Town Development Rights with County	08-08	Farmland
Riverhead Meadows	7.72	Town Acquisition with County	06-08	Open Space
Totino	35.00	Town Development Rights with County	05-08	Farmland
Hodun	74.00	Town Development Rights with County	05-08	Farmland
Bell	19.70	Town Development Rights with County	05-08	Farmland
Fort Pat Motel	2.31	Town Acquisition	04-08	Open Space
Reeve	21.10	Town Development Rights with County	04-08	Farmland
Caracciolo	20.40	Town Development Rights with County	03-08	Farmland
Manzi	31.00	Town Development Rights with County	03-08	Farmland
Shoreline Development Corp	39.00	Town Development Rights with County	01-08	Farmland

attention to herbs, antique roses, and boxwood. “We didn’t know at the time, but we were becoming acquainted with the plants that would play a role in Bridge Gardens,” explains Neyens.

As they thought about retirement—Kilpatric, a native of Alabama, is a retired attorney; and Neyens, a native of Iowa, is a retired medical writer and editor—they knew they wanted to garden on a larger scale, but didn’t want to leave their home on Butter Lane. Instead, they went in search of new, additional land and this led them to the Mitchells Lane property, in 1987.

### The Gardens Today

Today, the Gardens consist of two unique spaces, developed over a 10-year planning period: the Inner Garden and the Outer Garden, separated by a privet hedge that creates a long allee. The Inner Garden was the first portion of the property acquired in ‘87, with the Outer Garden property acquired two years later. During the first season, 1988, the herb garden, the two perennial borders and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of privet hedge, planted in double rows, were begun. The herb garden knot was added in 1989 and in 1991, the water garden with the garden house (today the educational center and the Garden Manager’s



home) were added along with the ivy maze. In 1992, the hidden bamboo room was added to replace trees uprooted by Hurricane Bob, followed by the antique rose garden, the lavender parterre, and the beginnings of the topiary garden.



“Walking over the property for the first time, we knew immediately that this was the spot we wanted to garden,” said Kilpatric. The Gardens officially opened to the public in 1997, and over the ensuing years Kilpatric and Neyens have welcomed, on average, 1,500 visitors each season.

“We would garden even if no one ever saw the results of our labors. But it has been highly rewarding to see our work through the eyes of others,” said Neyens.

In a letter to their members in September 2007, Neyens and Kilpatric discussed their motivation for the donation to the Peconic Land Trust:

*“As we approached the commencement of a third decade here, we felt we should focus on the next phase, which was preservation without us. We considered a number of mechanisms for doing this.*

*“And last fall, we began serious discussions with the Trust. To our surprise and great pleasure, we have gone from exploration of possibilities to actual closing of a transaction in just over a year.*







*"We are confident that this is a good thing for Bridge Gardens to be a stand-alone operation no longer but to be integrated into the Trust's broader and varied program of conservation."*

The Trust has hired Rick Bogusch, gardener and landscape architect, to oversee Bridge Gardens. Rick, a graduate of Cornell University with a masters in Landscape Architecture, has an impressive resume—holding landscape design and gardening positions at Rockland Farm (Canaan, NY), The Old Chatham Shepherding Company, and Cornell University—and a love for gardens, making him the ideal steward for this special property.

"I'm looking forward to working not only with Jim and Harry, but with the staff of the Trust and an advisory committee that includes Board members, garden experts and local residents, to preserve the legacy of Bridge Gardens and to continue its evolution," said Bogusch.

### The 2009 Season

Bridge Gardens is currently closed for the season, but will reopen this Spring with visiting hours and special programs throughout the late Spring, Summer and early Fall. The 2009 schedule will be available in April. If you would like to visit the garden please contact Rick at

631.537.7440 or [BridgeGardens@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:BridgeGardens@PeconicLandTrust.org) for more information or visit the Trust's website at [www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Bridge\\_Gardens](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Bridge_Gardens). Individual and family seasonal memberships are also available.

The Trust is also seeking volunteers to help out with programming and visitor services at the Gardens this season. If you are interested, please contact Maura Doyle, the Trust's Volunteer Coordinator for more details at 631.283.3195 or [MDoyle@PeconicLandTrust.org](mailto:MDoyle@PeconicLandTrust.org). We look forward to welcoming you to this special garden in the near future. ■





# Special Events

## 2008 Events Bring Trust Supporters Together in Celebration of our 25th Anniversary

In commemoration of the Peconic Land Trust's 25th Anniversary, we held many celebrations that brought together our supporters from across Long Island and beyond. From the **Peconinic** in June at the Leuthardt Farm in Riverhead—part of the 544-acre conservation of the former KeySpan property—to the **North Fork Beach Party** at newly conserved historic New Suffolk Waterfront in Southold; the **Shelter Island Garden Party** at Patrick Parcels & Annbeth Eschbach's Oriole Farm with its wonderful array of unique birdhouses by local celebrities; **Through Farms and Fields** at the magical Halsey apple farm, Whitecap, in Water Mill; and culminating with the glorious evening at Quail Hill Farm's **At the Common Table**, the Trust showcased some incredible farm and natural land conservation sites in all five towns of the East End. We hope that you will join us in 2009 as we continue to celebrate all that we have achieved together. ■

### Peconinic



Volunteers Linda Lacchia, Teresa Linder and Pingree Loucheim

Husband volunteers: Darren Mikula and Bill Schutt

### North Fork Beach Party



Stephen Searl and Parnel Wickham

### Shelter Island Garden Party

Photos by: John Catrambone

A 2009 Calendar featuring the birdhouses is also available on our website, [www.PeconicLandTrust.org](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org).



Kirsten Lewis



Rebecca Mundy



Kenneth DiPaola



Jimmy Buffett



Susan Cronin



Commander Cody



Jim Dougherty



Amanda Clark



Christian McLean



# Through Farms and Fields

Photos by: Richard Lewin

Through Farms and Fields was generously sponsored by The Corcoran Group, Tiffany & Co., and Magaschoni.



Bill McCuddy, Sue McCuddy and Bob Schaeffer



Christina Lowris, Alex Panos, Lauren Muss and Marty Burger



Daniel Shedrick and Semara Heafitz



Leanne Shear and John L. Halsey



Emma Clurman, Richard DeRose and Kathy Kennedy



Kristina Klug, John v.H. Halsey and Amy Halsey



Paula Yount, Lynn Wesnofske and Mary Busch



Kathleen King and Zvi Friedman



Staff and Committee for the Peconic Land Trust's Through Farms and Fields. Back row: Margaret Doyle, Shira Kalish, Tim Caufield, Emma Clurman (Chair), Marie Gallinari, Renee Despina, Kathy Kennedy. Front row: Linda Lacchia, Robin Harris, Donna Boava, Faith Podolsky

# Quail Hill Farm's At the Common Table

Photos by: Amagansett Studios





## Connections

# A Little Bit of Something for Everyone

Our 25th Anniversary year saw record attendance and participation at nearly all 40 of the Trust's educational programs. Beginning with an overflow crowd of orchid-lovers at the **Bianchi-Davis Greenhouses** in Riverhead, to sold-out programs that included the winemaker's tour at **Wölffer Estate Vineyard**, a tour by kayak of the **Berglund Preserve** in Southampton via Scallop Pond, visits to **Catapano Dairy Farm**, **Mecox Bay Dairy** and **Seven Ponds Orchard**, a gardeners workshop at **Bridge Gardens**, birding at **Laurel Lake** and clean-up day at the **Thornton Smith Preserve**, 2008 presented many exciting opportunities to meet old friends, and to make new ones.

The Trust's "Connections" programming seeks literally to connect you to nature and the environment, to develop and expand upon your appreciation of Long Island's agricultural heritage, and to provide fun opportunities to meet and learn from those engaged in the outdoor sciences. Our 2009 calendar of programs begins in early March, so keep an eye on your mail, or go online to check out our website at [www.peconiclandtrust.org](http://www.peconiclandtrust.org) for information about upcoming activities and events! ■



*Ed Florimont at Wölffer Wine Tour*



*Bianchi-Davis Orchid Tour*



*Touring the vines of Wölffer Estate*



*Kayak launch at Scallop Pond*



*Catapano Goats*



*Family Day at Seven Pond Orchard*



*Exploring Wilson's Grove*



*Examining Beach Seining at East Point Preserve*





*Pumpkin picking at Seven Ponds Orchard*



*Quail Hill Farm's Tomato Taste-Off 2008*



*Visit to North Fork Potato Chip Co.*



*Building birdhouses at Quail Hill Farm*



*Migratory Bird Walk at Laurel Lake*



*Thornton Smith Preserve Clean-up Crew from Boy Scout Troop 39, Mattituck*



*Getting lost in a Corn Maze at Seven Ponds Orchard*

## *Plein Air Peconic*

The 12 talented artists of *Plein Air Peconic* created a beautiful collection of new works this year, featuring many of the lands conserved with the help of the Trust. With access arranged through the Trust, this wonderful group of artists painted and photographed scenes often not available to the general public. Several well-attended exhibitions were held at galleries on the North and South Forks, including **Ashawagh Hall** in East Hampton, the **Quogue Library Art Gallery**, **The South Street Gallery** in Greenport, and the **Grenning Gallery** in Sag Harbor.



*John v.H. Halsey, Casey Chalem Anderson, Gordon Matheson and Terry Elkins*

A percentage of the sales of these landscapes provides financial support for the conservation work of the Trust. Expanding on the success of this cooperative effort, the Trust created a beautiful set of note cards and a 14-month calendar featuring images from the work of the Plein Air artists. These items make wonderful gifts, and are available through our website. ■

# 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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