Since 1983, you have made it possible for the Peconic Land Trust to complete nearly 500 conservation projects, conserving over 12,000 acres of land that provide a myriad of benefits in this remarkable region of ours: farms that grow fresh, local produce that feed and sustain us; woodlands that filter rainfall and recharge our sole source of water; rich soils that produce diverse agricultural products that strengthen our local economy; wetlands that cleanse our bays and nurture shellfish and marine life; natural lands with trails, parks and vistas that inspire and renew us; historic sites that preserve our heritage and reflect our past; and dunes and beaches that protect our fragile coastlines, homes, and businesses. Because of you, and the work of many, the East End still retains much of its bucolic character, beauty, and charm.

Our success to date has been accomplished in concert with landowners, communities, partner organizations, government, and people like you. We are pragmatic, innovative, and balanced in all that we do, seeking win-win solutions to complex challenges. But to ensure our continued effectiveness, we must act now to secure our conservation legacy for our children and future generations. We are still facing a crisis. For as much land as we have saved, there is still more threatened with development.

Continued to page 6
As we approach the Trust’s 35th year in 2018, I’ve been reflecting on why I am here, doing what I do. My love for Long Island, especially the East End, is a function of the people, places and experiences that have molded and inspired me throughout my lifetime: catching blowfish in Great Peconic Bay with my grandfather; working for Charlton Halsey on his Water Mill potato farm in my youth; picking blueberries and beach plums with my mom, sisters, cousins, and aunts; and racing Lightnings on Shinnecock Bay with my father and friends.

It’s no wonder that I returned here in 1983 after 13 years away, with my newlywed wife, to start a family and my life’s work with the Peconic Land Trust. Founded by myself, Richard W. King, Terry Stubelek, Roy L. Wines, Jr., and Edward P. Sharretts, Jr., we began a labor of love to conserve the working farms, natural lands, and heritage of Long Island not only for ourselves, but for future generations.

Our work has never been easy, yet in spite of tremendous development pressures, high real estate values, and the complexities within families, communities, and government entities, you have made it possible for the Trust to conserve working farms, watersheds, shorelines, historic resources, trails, vistas, and more. Over 12,000 acres have been protected in concert with landowners, partner organizations, local government, and thousands of people like you who support our conservation work.

All of this is to say that it takes many hands to accomplish anything, especially the preservation of Long Island’s natural resources, heritage, and community character. Given the continued press of unrelenting development, we need to redouble our efforts, recognize both our successes and failures over the years, and adapt to ever changing realities. This requires pragmatism, innovation, patience, consistency in purpose, and respect for each other.

As we embark on our 35th anniversary, I ask you to consider the people, places, and experiences that have brought you here to Long Island. Consider what you can do to assure that the historic, agricultural and natural assets that bless our communities remain here for our descendants. Let’s recommit ourselves to protecting what we know and love for future generations with a year-end gift to our Annual Fund in honor of the people, places and experience that have made us who we are. Thanks again for making our work possible!

Enjoy the Holidays!

We can do so much more because of you!

Your Gift Matters

Your gift to the Annual Fund helps protect our working farms, natural lands, and agricultural heritage.

Without your support, our work would not be possible.

Giving is easy!
Simply return the enclosed gift envelope | Visit www.PeconicLandTrust.org
Call us at 631.283.3195 | Email us at: Info@PeconicLandTrust.org
Remembering Robert M. Meltzer

This spring, we celebrated the life of Robert Meltzer, a member of the Peconic Land Trust’s Board of Directors from 1996 through 2002. We send our warmest thoughts and deepest sympathies to his wife Meryl and family.

We were fortunate that Bob chose to work with us, and contribute his financial skills and his commitment to preservation and the arts. “Bob’s contribution to the Trust was always thoughtful and considered during his board tenure and in the many years thereafter,” said Thomas B. Williams, chair of the Trust’s board during Bob’s tenure. “Bob provided counsel that helped us move our conservation mission forward, providing grounded advice and financial oversight.”

In addition to serving on the Trust’s Board, Bob was dedicated to numerous non-profits and educational institutions, including as president and chairman of the American Federation of the Arts and a longtime board member of the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation. He also served as a trustee of the Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies and the Dallas Museum of Art. Bob supported a number of local organizations including the Parrish Art Museum and Southampton Youth Services in addition to the Trust.

We were honored that Bob and his family graciously included the Trust as an organization to be remembered and are touched by the generosity of his family and friends who made contributions to the Trust in Bob’s name. There were so many thoughtful comments, including this from his friends Helena and Charlie Rosenberg: “In fond memory of Bob and his dedication to making the world around him a more gracious and beautiful place.”

Peconic Legacy Circle
- a gift for future generations

Like planting trees, I want to leave a legacy for future generations that will nourish the essence of this place, as represented in the land I have come to cherish.

-Nancy Gilbert,
Peconic Legacy Circle Member

We need your help to continue to save the land we love.
Consider making a gift through your will, trust, retirement account or life insurance.
You can make a lasting contribution that will truly benefit future generations.

Peconic Legacy Circle
Maddy Beckwith | Glorian L. Berk | Thomas K. Chu
John & Candice Frawley | Nancy Gilbert
Susan Gullia | Jean R. Held | Jane T. Iselin
Kathleen King | Anne Lange | Joe Mc Kay
Sandra Powers | Carol J. Steinberg

We are here to help.
Contact Amanda Abraham, Director of Development at 631.283.3195 or AAbraham@PeconicLandTrust.org
Suffolk County Farmland Preservation Program Challenged

In September 2016, the New York State Supreme Court ruled against Suffolk County in a decision that bars its Farmland Preservation Program from permitting agricultural structures, including barns, deer fencing and irrigation systems on farmland that the County has protected for bona fide agricultural production over the past 40 years. This decision has created confusion and uncertainty by redefining a program created to assure the future of agriculture as a critical component of our local economy into an open space program that prohibits structures of any kind “as the existing openness, natural condition, and present state of use of any purchased PDR property is diminished, if not extinguished, by the erection or installation of the structures, uses, and activities, agricultural and non-agricultural…”

The Suffolk County Farmland Preservation Program is the first of its kind in the United States, in place since 1974. This court decision has the potential to unravel 40 years of farmland protection efforts. The County is appealing this decision. The Peconic Land Trust along with the Long Island Farm Bureau, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Farm Credit East, American Farmland Trust, New York League of Conservation Voters, and the Long Island Wine Council have filed an amicus brief that has been accepted by the Appellate Division. The appeal has been granted an expedited review, set for December 11, 2017. We remain hopeful and will share the outcome in the new year.

There are 19,000 acres of protected farmland and 15,000 acres of unprotected farmland in Suffolk County that are in greater jeopardy of development as a result of the Court’s decision. Furthermore, similar farmland preservation programs at the Town level could be impacted by the decision if it is not overturned upon appeal. As a conservation organization whose mission includes the protection of working farms on Long Island, we recognize that this Court decision can have profound implications for the future of farming on Long Island and undermine the viability of our agricultural economy.

Interested in learning more? Contact Melanie Cirillo at 631.283.3195 or MCirillo@PeconicLandTrust.org.

Agriculture Capital Equipment Grant Update

In the summer of 2015, the Peconic Land Trust was selected to administer a grant by New York’s Empire State Development for $1 million to provide financial assistance towards the purchase of infrastructure and capital equipment for beginning, transitioning and expanding farm operations. By the end of this year, over $800,000 in funds will have

“We are a small farm focused on raising native solitary bees and growing blueberries and raspberries. Through the Ag Capital Grant, we received assistance in building our barn and purchasing a tractor — big ticket items critical to our growth and success. We are happy to report that our mason bees had a banner year, and our future work with these pollinators looks promising. Thank you Peconic Land Trust!”

Laura Klahre, Blossom Meadow Farm
Orient Wetlands & Farmland: Tide Gate Restoration & Dedication

To all of you who have supported the protection and restoration of the Edwards Farmland and Wetlands project, thank you! Your gift shows your love of the Oysterponds landscape and your wish to sustain and support its agricultural history and legacy.

In 2015, the Peconic Land Trust, in partnership with the Town of Southold, used its revolving fund to purchase and protect 21 acres of farmland, woodlands, and wetlands in Orient. This land belonged to the Edwards, Latham, and Terry families since the early 19th century, and is an important part of the Oysterponds community’s agricultural heritage. Now the property will always be farmed as part of the Trust’s Farms for the Future Initiative. This program gives farmers access to affordable and sustainable farmland.

Thanks to the generosity of over 150 people, we are more than halfway to our goal of $450,000, which includes repayment to the revolving fund and costs related to the restoration of the land and the tide gate.

Installation of a tide gate is critical for providing a healthy habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and saltmarsh sparrows.

The restoration of the tide gate on the southern portion of the farmland, which was destroyed during Superstorm Sandy, is currently underway. Once the tide gate is installed in early 2018, the wetlands will provide a healthier habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and marsh sparrows.

Additionally, we are exploring the construction of an observation deck on the south side of the wetlands overlooking Little Bay in honor of Joseph L. Townsend, Jr. Joe, a member of the Peconic Land Trust’s Board of Directors (1987-1994, 2012-2016), has done outstanding work on behalf of the Trust and the East End as a conservationist, environmentalist, and civic activist.

To learn more or to make a gift today, please visit us online at www.PeconicLandTrust.org/Edwards or call Amanda Abraham at 631.283.3195.

been pre-approved to 36 operations, for everything from deer fencing and barns, to farmstands, tractors, boats and oyster baskets.

There are still funds available. For more information, visit www.PeconicLandTrust.org/AgGrant or email AgGrant@PeconicLandTrust.org.

“The Ag Capital Grant was essential in getting the Great Gun Shellfish Farm established and running —literally. It enabled the purchase of the farm’s work skiff, outboard engine, and trailer — without which the farm could not operate. Awarded during our startup year, the grant could not have come at a more crucial time. I feel very fortunate to have received this assistance from the Peconic Land Trust and Empire State Development.”

Paul McCormick, Great Gun Shellfish Farm
Our land, water and heritage will always need our protection, vigilance, and care, but never more so than now. The stakes are high, not only for us, but for our region. Imagine what our communities would look like tomorrow without more conservation today. There would be fewer farms, less open space, more development, and even more traffic!

Our vision is to save and steward the best of Long Island and the East End forevermore – its land, water, and heritage. Our working farms, natural lands, and historic places make life livable for millions of people today and are essential to the health and happiness of future generations. Through conservation, we preserve the quality of life we enjoy today for our children and generations to come.

What do we need to assure the permanence of what we have accomplished? How do we ensure that the Trust will meet its perpetual responsibilities for generations to come? Who will be the Trust’s next generation of leaders? How do we maximize our impact going forward and enhance our capacity to do so?

As we begin our 35th year, we are looking to our past to inform our future. With your help, we will make new investments in staff and resources to:

**Identify new conservation tools** that are flexible to meet new challenges in land protection and **increase our capacity** to assist landowners as they consider the future use, ownership, and management of their land.

**Increase our access to capital** to remain competitive in the real estate market. The Trust’s ability to access funds to quickly acquire threatened land will be a cornerstone of our work in the future. We need to be more agile than our government partners and able to react immediately to conservation opportunities.

**Deepen our stewardship** capabilities to sustain, restore, and defend water quality, land, and wildlife habitats. Increase our capacity to enrich agricultural soils, restore wetlands and shorelines, and help farmers, landscapers, and the public to farm, work and live sustainably. We must also help our public partners meet their perpetual stewardship responsibilities to care for and protect the natural resources that continue to define our communities.

**Assure a future for farming and local food.** The value of protected farmland continues to escalate with no end in sight as non-farmers acquire it for other purposes. Farmland must not only be protected from development, but also for farming. We must clarify the definition of agriculture and agricultural production for the future, and provide farmers with access to affordable farmland to both purchase and lease.

**Enhance our recreational and education programming through partnerships** with farms, gardens, nature preserves, and a variety of institutions across our communities. By exposing more people to our local wonder and bounty, we can strengthen a conservation ethic to carry us into the future.

**Improve our Stewardship Centers** — Quail Hill Farm, Bridge Gardens, the Agricultural Center at Charnews Farm — to provide greater public access for learning, growing, and cultivating. Through more partnerships with many organizations, we can enable more people to get their hands into the soil; lease more farmland to new and established farmers; provide more community garden plots to individuals and families interested in growing their own food; and train the next generation of farmers and landscape professionals through apprenticeships and internships.

With you as our partner, there is much to be accomplished in the years and decades ahead. You make it all possible!
In June, William Zebroski, Jr., protected 20 acres of productive agricultural lands in Southold, selling the development rights on his farmland at a bargain sale to the Town of Southold.

According to Southold’s Land Preservation Coordinator at the public board presentation in June 2017, the sale price was approximately 23 percent less than the appraised value of the land.

Once conserved, Mr. Zebroski sold the protected farmland to neighboring farmers, Peter and Irene Treiber of Treiber Farms. The Trust assisted both the Town and Mr. Zebroski on the sale, specifically as it related to the bargain sale, which constitutes a substantial and generous gift to the Town of Southold and the community. The farmland is on the north side of Route 48, to the west of Kenney Road.

As reported in Riverhead Local in June, before casting his vote at the Town Board meeting, Supervisor Scott Russell said Mr. Zebroski was “one of the most decent people I’ve ever met.”

Mr. Zebroski inherited the land from his grandfather, who grew mostly potatoes along with Brussel sprouts and cauliflower. The land was leased to various farmers over the years, most recently leased to the Treibers who had established a cover crop on the land. Mr. Zebroski, who worked for the Town of Southold for over 20 years, is fascinated by the change in demand for agricultural products.

He made note of the recent diversification of fruits, vegetables and crops, and commented on how the scale of farming here is so much smaller than what is seen upstate. Mr. Zebroski wishes the family the best of luck, and is pleased to see this local farm family care for his family lands.

The Treiber family began their farming operation about three years ago, first acquiring the 34 acres to the east of the Zebroski farmland, and two years ago acquiring the property to the south which included barn space — much needed by the farm for storage — and includes greenhouse and coops for chickens.

A farming family, Peter and Irene Treiber are joined on the farm by their son Pete, who is the farm manager, along with their daughter Kelly and nephew Chris — and many family friends and members of the community make up the farm’s crew. The farm grows fruits, berries and vegetables, and raises chickens and bees. The Treibers’ plans are to have a fully sustainable farm operation.

Mr. Treiber attributes the friendliness and helpfulness of the East End farming community for helping him and his family get established: “They shake your hand, tell you the truth with no judgement. Everyone is out to help. It’s a good feeling to have this great support from everyone in the community.”

We thank Bill Zebroski for his generosity to keep this beautiful farmland alive and wish the Treibers much success with their new farm. We look forward to seeing Treiber Farms grow!
If you haven’t visited Bridge Gardens yet, you need to stop in soon. The 5-acre gardens, donated to the Trust by Harry Neyens and Jim Kilpatric in 2008, flourish under the skillful hands of Garden Manager Rick Bogusch, and feature low impact lawn and gardening workshops that can be implemented by everyone – from novice to skilled gardeners.

These workshops are often offered in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, Peconic Estuary Program, Horticultural Alliance of the Hamptons, Summerhill Landscapes, Jackson Dodds, and others. While programming covers everything from composting and growing food to the benefits of native plants and pollinators, a highlight is the season-long organic lawn care series with Paul Wagner of Greener Pastures Organics, in partnership with the Perfect Earth Project.

A lawn and landscape professional, Paul has provided free lawn care advice weekly to homeowners and professional landscapers at Bridge Gardens since 2014. In addition, Paul presented a three-part organic lawn care series and a three-part organic rose care series this year. Topics included controlling crabgrass, selecting and planting the best grass seed, controlling insects and fungus in the lawn, lawn renovation strategies, and guidance on growing and maintaining roses organically.

If you missed this year’s workshops with Paul, here are a few lawn tips from the season:

- Generally, the best grass seed blend for Long Island is 90% tall fescue and 10% bluegrass.
- Annual spring seeding of the lawn improves density and helps combat weeds in your lawn.
- The best grub control to use is beneficial nematodes, and the right time to apply nematodes is in September.

For more garden tips, visit our website at www.PeconicLandTrust.org/BridgeGardens.

When asked about his connection to the Gardens, Paul said, "Being involved at Bridge Gardens is very rewarding because of all the people that I interact with there. People that come to learn along with Rick and the team at the Trust all love plants, gardening and protecting the environment. I feel like I am really able to make a difference."

Thank you Paul and to all our partners at Bridge Gardens!

Now is the perfect time to join Bridge Gardens for the 2018 season. Visit www.PeconicLandTrust.org/BridgeGardens for membership information and benefits.
Lettuce Celebrate!

As we bring in the fruits of autumn I want to pause for a moment to praise some greenery that has been part of the harvest throughout three seasons: Lactuca sativa, or commonly, lettuce.

Perhaps I am mistaken, but by my count we have offered the classic salad green — all of our cultivated strains originated from an Asiatic weed by the way — as part of our CSA Farm Share on all but one 2017 Harvest days. For that to occur we have to be on our (farm) toes, and sun & moon, heat & cool, and rain must choose to cooperate.

Lettuce is not difficult to grow, though this cultivar is not enamored of the heat of July and August. This leafy green much prefers the cool of early spring and later autumn, and even the cold winter nights somewhat protected in our greenhouses. I admit my bias — for me the evening meal is not complete without a salad, with lettuce in the starring role.

Our first seeding of the year occurred on the 17th of March: Red Cross, Red Fire, Red Rosie, Green Deer Tongue, Nevada, Crispino, and Forellenschluss (Speckled like a Trout). 1 seed per cell in trays arranged with 128 cells, 30 trays destined to be planted out in April (a potential of 3840 heads).

Throughout the season traditionally we seed an additional 30 trays every 2-3 weeks. The seeds usually germinate in 7-10 days in our 65-70 degree greenhouse; after 3 weeks they are escorted outside to the hardening-off pen, and in another week we transplant the young seedlings into Amagansett soil.

On the 1st of August we seeded our 7th and final succession of lettuce: Sierra, Devil’s Ear, Pablo, Cocarde, Midnight Ruffles, Little Gem, Panisse, and Coastal Star, among others, and this planting, as the Autumn growth slows with the shorter days, will be harvestable into November. Although many lettuces bolted (the natural impulse to produce seed) in the heat of this September, a number of prize heads still held out in our handsome field of brassicas (cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli) on Birch Hill.

Over the course of the harvest seasons something like 26,880 lettuces have ripened in our fields (with some lost to heat or rabbits), though most, we hope, have found a way onto waiting plates (more than a few have found a way to mine). For those who are part of the Quail Hill Farm Winter Share lettuce should continue to leaf out in our greenhouses throughout February.

Lettuce celebrate: not only the gift of 3 seasons of a delicious green plant, but also the Autumn brilliance (in our Valley) of Bright Lights Cosmos, Calendula, Tithonia (Mexican sunflower) Crackerjack Marigolds, and yes, still a few Autumn Beauty sunflowers — in the words of the Italian poet, Eugenio Montale, crazy with the light — ambitious, willing to greet the November sun.

There's still time to join Quail Hill Farms unique winter CSA.
Root vegetables and fresh greens are available from the farm's greenhouse through February!
And, don't forget, Quail Hill's Summer Share Season starts the first weekend in June.
More info at www.PeconicLandTrust.org/QuailHillFarm
Natural Lands

Why Save Indian Rock?

Thanks so much to all of you who have contributed to help save Indian Rock in Rocky Point, NY. Please ask your friends and neighbors for their help as well, we still have a lot to raise by December 31!

It is believed that Rocky Point got its name from this impressive three-story high glacial erratic called Indian Rock. The unique natural landmark holds layers of local Native American and English settler lore, as well as geological and ecological history. It is the second largest glacial erratic deposited on Long Island that is still intact today.

Located on a residential lot on Sam’s Path, the Trust is working to purchase the property and restore the land around Indian Rock to a natural meadow. Students and researchers will be able to visit the site to get a deeper understanding of geological and Native American history.

The preservation of this land and glacial formation will provide a wonderful open greenspace for the community.

The cost to the Trust, including acquisition, restoration and beautification of the property, is $330,000. We need to raise this amount in full through fundraising efforts by December 31, 2017 in order for the Trust to move forward on the purchase of the property. Please make a gift today!

To learn more or to make a gift today, please visit us online at www.PeconicLandTrust.org/IndianRock or call Jessie Marcus at 631.283.3195.

Agricultural Center at Charnews Farm

Farmer Spotlight: Smoke & Tilth

Meg and Cam Strecker are two Farms for the Future farmers at the Agricultural Center at Charnews Farm in Southold. During the 2017 season, their first at the Ag Center, the couple grew cut flowers and edible flowers, harvested honey and in the coming year plan to grow herbs and plants for essential oils and tinctures. Their main focus: “to create a pollinator habitat for the benefit of native pollinators and our honey bee colonies as well as contribute to the success of our neighboring farming community,” said Meg.

The couple are co-owners of Tilth & Smoke, a name inspired by the methods they use to cultivate their honey and flowers. Tilth, meaning the act of keeping the land/soil in good condition and smoke being one of the most useful tools in beekeeping.

Cam’s journey into farming started with his childhood, growing up on a farm in New South Wales, Australia, where his family raised sheep, cattle and hogs. Their main crop focus was wheat, alfafa, barley and cow peas. Later the family moved to a larger farm and converted to primarily grain production, harvesting Durham & bread wheat, sorghum, chickpeas, sunflowers and soya beans.

For Meg, the cross over from art to farming was very natural, “whether it be an old sculpture, a painting, planting seedlings or tending to bees — the systems all connect in some unexplained way.” Meg started learning and working with bees in 2010 and has now completed her second year enrolled in the Montana State Beekeeping Certification program. She also volunteers as an assistant at the NYC Beekeeping Field Studies Program, educating new beekeepers and providing resources for community garden apiaries.

Want to keep up with what Meg and Cam Strecker are doing? Visit their website www.tilthandsmoke.com.
Through Farms & Fields
Whitecap Farm, Water Mill New York
honoring the conservation dedication of Kathleen King
Quail Hill Farm: AT THE COMMON TABLE 2017
An Abundance of Gratitude to our 2017 

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August 6, 2017
Whitecap Farm, Water Mill, NY

hosted by: John and Evelyn Halsey,
Amy and Austin Halsey-Cohn and
Jennifer and Craig Dupree

honoring: Kathleen King

Conservation Champions

Amanda and Don Mullen

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At the Common Table
September 9th, 2017
Quail Hill Farm, Amagansett, New York

ATCT Sponsors:
The Hilaria and Alec Baldwin Foundation,
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Chefs & Winemakers:
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Stec and J. Silhan, Mill House Inn/A Kitchen 4 Liam; Peter
Ambrose; Arjun Achuthan; Arthur Wolf, Smokin’ Wolf; Molly
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Through Farms & Fields

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Mission Statement
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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