



Photos: Jeff Heatley

## PIQUI PRESERVE

### Community Effort Saves Soundfront Site

In August, Peconic Land Trust acquired a .929-acre parcel on Long Island Sound in Peconic with funds raised by neighbors. One of only two vacant lots in the area, its prominent feature is an environmentally-sensitive “double dune” that has been the focus of this conservation effort. Since it is bounded on the westerly side by Suffolk County-owned Goldsmith Inlet Park, it is hoped that Suffolk County will purchase the protected land from Peconic Land Trust in the future. The Trust will continue to work with the community to facilitate the protection of the northerly portion that makes up the rest of the “double dune” area. Relatively small in size, the site is



home to an impressive plant population that includes a maritime forest. Woodland plants include American Beech, Black Cherry, Red “Norway” Pine, Whorled Loosetrife, Bracken Fern, and Mockernut Hickory or Bitternut Hickory, Southern species common on Long Island, as well as numerous other species that you would expect to find. In the dune area, the following plants are represented: American White Cedar, Eastern Red Cedar, Bear “Scrub” Oak, Post “Iron” Oak, Southern Bayberry, Beach Plum, Rosa Rugosa, Rosa Virginiana, Lowbush Blueberry, Pine Barrens Heather, Blue Toadflax, Old Field Toadflax or Spiked Lobelia, Prickley Pear, Sweet

**Piqui Preserve**  
**Community Effort Saves Soundfront Site**

*« continued from front page*

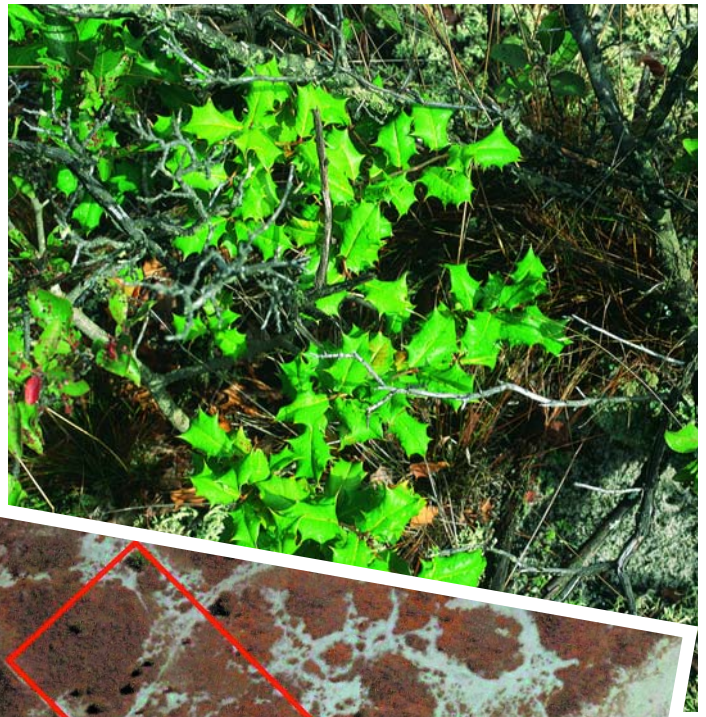
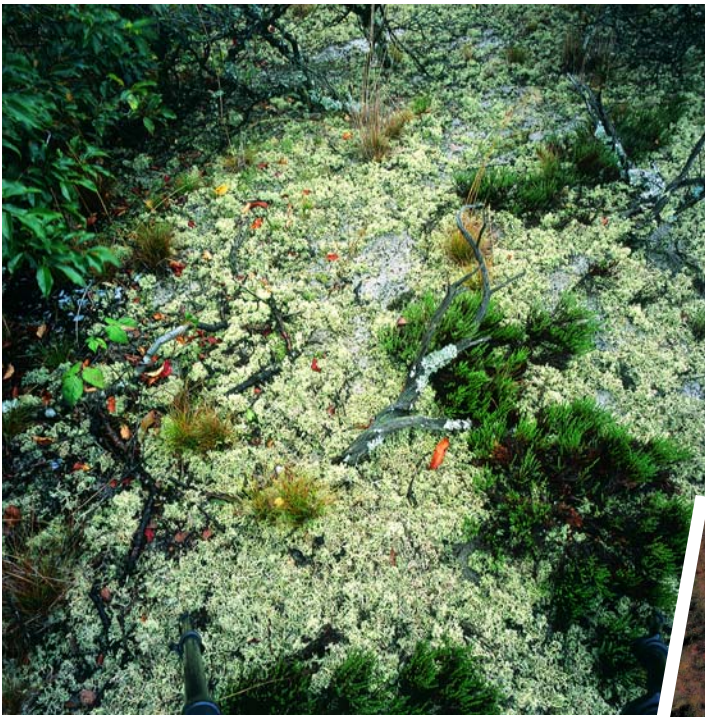
Goldenrod, Seaside Goldenrod, Sea Rocket, Smaller Pussytoes, and Swamp Cutgrass. These plant communities sustain diverse wildlife, including deer, toads, and butterflies to name just a few.

John v.H. Halsey, President of Peconic Land Trust, points out, “The protection of this parcel is significant in that it adds another piece to the larger conservation effort at Goldsmith’s Inlet. In 1999, the Trust received a donation from Hugh Switzer of three building lots overlooking protected Suffolk County parkland across the Inlet, thereby preserving wetlands and wildlife habitat. It is also an impressive example of what can be achieved by a conservation-minded community. Working with the Diamond Lane neighbors has been rewarding for our staff and the outcome is very satisfying.” Two of the neighbors, Marion Gottbetter and Carmen Ramis comment, “We’re thrilled to have been able to preserve a vulnerable part of the Peconic dune and hope that our efforts will spark a greater initiative to keep the entire area forever intact. We would not have been able to succeed without the tenacious support of the preservation-minded people of Peconic and the Peconic Land Trust. The property is named after Carmen Galdo, (the mother of Ms. Ramis), who was known as Piqui (pronounced “picky”) and whose most joyous moments in life were spent on the water.”



Photos: Jeff Heatley





Photos: Jeff Healey

Switzer Preserve - Hugh Switzer donated three building lots in the Goldsmith's Inlet area of Peconic, eliminating potential development and preserving existing wetlands and wildlife habitat. These lots view protected parkland across the Inlet that is owned by Suffolk County. Piqui Preserve is to the east of the County parkland.

## Quail Hill Farm and Stonyhill Nursery: Good Neighbors

Stonyhill Nursery in Amagansett was founded in 1989, roughly around the time that the Trust's Quail Hill Farm was first organized (its earlier name was "Promised Land Farm"). As you might expect, changes have taken place at both operations over the last 14 years. Quail Hill Farm, through the generosity of Deborah Ann Light, has grown from its original 15 acres to the present 25 organic acres planted in vegetables, fruits, and flowers. Stonyhill has grown as well, from the first acre planted to the current 75 acres. Like any good neighbors, each has helped the other out, sharing equipment, information, and solutions to the occasional pesky problem.

Stonyhill's original goal was to make the nursery environmentally friendly and ultimately organic. While most commercial growers use "climax" planting (all the plants in a block are the same), Stonyhill's trees, shrubs, and evergreens are integrated in 9-row blocks with 10' spacing between rows. This biodiversity minimizes nursery loss in case of a pest invasion. It also improves air circulation and allows the plants enough room to grow. The result is hardy, quality stock that is more disease-resistant. Stonyhill's irrigation method is also noteworthy. Overhead cannons deliver water rather than close-to-the-ground sprinklers. Not only does this arrangement keep the foliage free of dust so that photosynthesis is enhanced, but it also drowns bugs! An effective solution, since Stonyhill has not used insecticides for the last six years. Efforts to minimize soil erosion have also been key to the nursery's management practices. A blend of fescue and rye grass that can take traffic covers the ground between the rows of plants, stabilizing the soil. In addition, the land has been graded so that the wide grass strips between the rows acts as a waterway, directing water through the nursery in a natural direction. The soil is actively refurbished from the nursery's on-site compost, replenishing soil loss as stock is sold and removed.

Stonyhill Nursery gets high grades for its management practices. Stonyhill's owners, Bob Strubel, Sumner Pingree, and Ken Pascual think the additional work and expense is worth it . . . and its organic farm neighbor, Quail Hill, couldn't agree more!



Photo: Denise Markut

North Fork Stewardship Assistant Ashlee Reiniger, Trust, and Steve Scheider on a 67 JD 3020 tractor and disc, a generous donation from Kurt Siebert. Thank you Kurt!

## Experiment at Smith Corner Preserve

This past summer, Peconic Land Trust worked with Cornell Cooperative Extension to conduct a Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) control experiment at the Trust's Smith Corner Preserve in Sagaponack. Funded with a generous donation from Faye and Rich Nespola, the goal of the project was to scientifically determine if several experimental methods of treatment can help to control the growth of *Phragmites*. This species dominates disturbed and altered wetlands, excluding most native flora and fauna, drastically altering the appearance of our coast landscapes, and eliminating historic views. Permission to conduct the experiment was obtained from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the Town of Southampton Trustees before establishing plots within the existing band of *Phragmites* along the southwest side of Sagaponack Pond. Permitted (experimental) treatments included application of elemental sulfur, application of crystalized salt or a one-time cutting. The first two treatments were intended to make the root zone inhospitable to the reeds while the

latter was intended to remove stored energy in the above ground shoots just prior to dormancy. Control plots were established among the treatment plots to determine the "normal" growth habit of reeds along the Sag Pond shoreline. In the spring, several Solonist Levelloggers were installed within the plots to record water temperature, salinity and depth at hourly intervals, enabling us to simultaneously track variations in water level and salinity. Fish sampling was also conducted adjacent to the plots to determine if our treatments had any effect on adjacent fauna. Results of the first year's application of salt and sulfur treatments will not be known until late fall, but the very wet spring greatly complicated these treatments that rely on slow release of material to remain effective. Retrieval and download of the data from the loggers will give us a better idea of what effects the rain had on our efforts to increase sediment salinity and sulfide concentrations. In light of this year's weather we may opt for more frequent lower dose applications of salt and sulfur next season.

## President's Message: Halsey Reflects and Projects ...

It is truly hard for me to believe that 20 years have passed since the founding of the Peconic Land Trust. It seems like only yesterday when our fledgling Board of Directors met in a living room and discussed our first projects, opening an office, and how best to reach out to landowners. For sure, my role in the organization has changed over the years from serving as the Trust's sole staff person to managing a team of 25 professionals engaged in land conservation. I have adapted my roles and responsibilities as the organization has grown. Our Board of Directors



*John v.H. Halsey, photographed at the Trust's first conservation site, Phillips Pond Preserve in Southampton, in 1987.*

Through our work with landowners and municipalities, we have protected over 6,500 acres on Long Island, but there is still

From the beginning, the Peconic Land Trust has sought fair and just conservation outcomes that respect landowners and their property rights as well as the public interest. We have been instrumental in many "win-win" situations and we look forward to many more in the years to come.

As our efforts continue, it is important to realize how fortunate we are to live in such a beautiful place. Yet, our communities are changing rapidly. Given the high value of land, we are losing our seniors, young people, service providers, and diversity. Ironically, the more land we protect, the greater the pressure on the remaining farmland and open space as well as those who live here. There are no easy answers to the many challenges facing our communities. We must think outside the box and respect each other as we struggle to retain the land and people that define our communities.

Our continued success is dependent on your support. This year's Challenge Grant is the largest yet. With over 150 pending conservation projects, we need every dollar we can raise. My thanks to all of you who have supported the Trust over the past 20 years. Keep it up because we can't do it without you.

- John v.H. Halsey



*Trust staff observed the organization's 20th anniversary with a Friday afternoon celebration.*

has also evolved from 4 founders to 15 conservationists from Eastern Long Island, all who share a deep love of the land and the people who make up our communities.

much to be done. Yes, there is more land to conserve and steward on behalf of future generations. But how we protect this land is as important as how much we protect.

### Silver Beech Preserve and High Point Preserve, Amagansett

*A pouring rain didn't dampen the spirits of those gathered to celebrate the gift of 239 acres in Amagansett. With Trust President John v.H. Halsey are Town of East Hampton Supervisor, Jay Schneiderman, who presented Margaret de Cuevas with a proclamation honoring her and Deborah Carmichael for their generous gift.*



*Photo: Marsha Kenny*

## Apprentice Program

Every summer, Peconic Land Trust is fortunate to have a great group of interesting, smart and hard working apprentices to assist with farming and stewardship. Our Quail Hill Farm program is a hands-on working/learning experience designed to educate dedicated candidates about sustainable agriculture and organic farming. We take people from all backgrounds: from inexperienced city folks looking to explore agriculture as a career option to experienced farmers looking for a new approach to agriculture. Apprentices often elect to continue their training beyond the first year. Apprentices work in all aspects of the farm's production: seeding, greenhouse production, soil mix preparation, composting, cultivating/weeding, harvesting, tractor work and assisting Farm members. During the course of the full season, Apprentices are given the information and time to learn organic farming's essential skills, CSA operation and the conservation efforts of PLT. In return, Apprentices are expected to give their labor for the daily working of the farm. Apprentices receive a weekly stipend and produce from the Farm. The Farm provides housing in the Accabonac Preserve House just 2 miles from Quail Hill Preserve. Our philosophy is to respect the Earth and all living beings; listen to the language of air, water, soil and your supervisors—this is the voice of experience. Apprentices are encouraged to question rather than voice opinions. The Apprenticeship is, at its core, a working/learning experience and the primary method for learning about organic farming is by performing tasks within our



Photo: Marsha Kenny

*North Fork Stewardship apprentices visited the Trust's main office in Southampton for orientation. (l. to r.) North Fork Stewardship Manager Denise Markut, apprentice Nicole Vasak, apprentice Brenda Williams, North Fork Stewardship Assistant Ashlee Reiniger, and Trust President John v.H. Halsey.*

farm system. Weekly assignments are made within the context of working as a team, and as part of the overall farm operations. A successful farm season depends on mutual cooperation and willingness to help one another accomplish this overall goal.

At the Trust's North Fork Stewardship Center, the Apprentice program is suited for anyone who has an interest in land conservation and the desire to learn the basics of land management through hard work. Apprentices work on our resource management team caring for preserves, monitoring conservation easements, mowing and clearing land, and assisting in all aspects of the Trust's stewardship work. The position provides an opportunity to learn about

land conservation planning, public policy and the land trust movement. Our program is a hands-on working/ learning experience designed to educate dedicated candidates about land conservation and the responsibilities of land stewardship. Self-motivation and the willingness to work as part of a team are important to a successful apprenticeship. Apprentices receive a stipend and housing is available at the North Fork Stewardship Center.

These programs are open to people from all backgrounds: from inexperienced students looking to explore land conservation as a career option to experienced individuals interested in what a conservation organization does with land after it is "protected." For more information on these stewardship programs, please visit the Trust's website [www.peconiclandtrust.org](http://www.peconiclandtrust.org). To apply, send a letter of intent and a resume to the Peconic Land Trust, PO Box 1776, Southampton, NY 11969.



Photo: Marsha Kenny

*Once again, the Trust was fortunate to have a terrific crew from Americorps to assist us with various stewardship tasks earlier this fall. (l. to r.) Peter Gerlach, PLT Vice President Tim Caufield, Dianna Ball, Erin Sovick, Chris Auer, Jessica Amundson and Scott Gates. Also on the team... Zoe Edelstein, Molly Johnstone, Emily Milton, and Dan Niles.*

## Celebrating the Trust's 20th Anniversary



After last Spring's rain, the Trust's annual Peconic was a spectacular, sunny day in the orchard at Quail Hill Farm . . . one of the highlights was a delicious cake.



Marian Sumner, Julie Zakowski, Scott Chaskey, Andy Johnson, Marsha Kenny, and Tim Caufield



Lee Foster, Carol DeVito, and Board Member Jane Iselin



Vanessa Craigo, Communications Manager, and Marie Gallinari, Office Manager



North Fork Stewardship Assistant Ashlee Reiniger



Board Member Herb Golden, Julie Zaykowski, and Mary Golden



North Fork Stewardship Manager Denise Markut and Jack McGreevy



Trust Chairman Tom Williams proudly displays a proclamation from New York State, one of the many received in honor of the 20th Anniversary.

Photos: Marsha Kenny

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## Recent Conservation Accomplishments

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### TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

#### Ship Wreck Lane Preserve

With generous donations, a very sensitive half-acre parcel off Ship Wreck Lane in Amagansett was protected in perpetuity. The site contains dune and beach vegetation, as well as pine trees and other native flora. This important parcel is in the vicinity of reserved areas, scenic easements and lands held by the State of New York.

#### Silver Beech Preserve and High Point Preserve

Peconic Land Trust received its largest gift of land, 239 acres, from Margaret de Cuevas and Deborah Carmichael. The gift includes two separate parcels—Silver Beech Preserve (189 acres) and High Point Preserve (50 acres). This acreage is located in the section of the Town of East Hampton's Water Recharge Overlay District that include the deepest part of the aquifer, a sole source of drinking water. The 189-acre Silver Beech Preserve contains a mature forest of American beech, white oak, red maple, sassafras and flowering dogwood, one of a few remaining stands of this forest type on Long Island. Large blocks of undeveloped land such as this are extremely valuable for the continued existence of "forest interior" birds, species that are declining and no longer exist in many parts of Long Island.

#### Town of East Hampton and Sag Harbor Village - Hillside Development Corp.

The Trust facilitated this acquisition on behalf of the Town and Village. This site, just shy of 10 acres, consists of rolling woodland located off Hillside Drive. One of the last remaining large lots in Sag Harbor, this site could have been a 15-lot subdivision.

#### Town of East Hampton Acquisition - Whelan

This 5.5-acre site, consisting of slightly rolling woodland and wetlands, bisected approximately 400 acres of NYS-protected land from 37 acres of Town-protected land. As a result, an established trail system extending from the Town land to the State land was interrupted by this parcel. The purchase and protection of this acreage was key to connecting the trail.

### TOWN OF RIVERHEAD

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - DiMola

The Town purchased the development rights on 40 acres of this 60-acre property is located on the south side of Sound Avenue in Baiting Hollow. The acreage is within a large block of hundreds of acres of previously protected farmland. The remain-

ing 20 acres of the property is steeply sloping woodland. The farmland area is currently used for equestrian activities.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Hartmann

These 54- and 29-acre parcels are in an area where preservation of the viewshed as well as agriculture is paramount. One parcel has road frontage on all sides along CR 105, Sound Avenue and Northville Turnpike, while the other has 200+ feet of frontage on CR 105. The Town has been awarded matching funds from NYS Ag & Markets for this purchase.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Burns

Development rights were purchased on 32 acres of a 35-acre parcel located north of Middle Country Road in Calverton. The mildly rolling farmland has most recently been used to grow Chinese vegetables. This parcel is part of a large block of agricultural parcels that are currently zoned Industrial A.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Sipala

Development rights were purchased on 46 acres of this 54-acre parcel that is cultivated with nursery stock. Located on the east side of Manor Lane in Jamesport, the site abuts already preserved farmland on two sides. The property had final subdivision approval for 39 building lots when the owner agreed to sell the development rights to the Town and create three 14-acre farm lots, each with its own development area.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Wells

This 26-acre property is part of an actively working potato farm that has been owned by the Wells family for hundreds of years. It is located on the north side of Sound Avenue in Aquebogue and has extensive road frontage on both Pennys Lane and Sound Shore Road. The potential yield on this land could have been close to 50 building lots.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Gammon

Development rights on 10.1 acres of a 10.89-acre farmland parcel were acquired by the Town. Located on the east side of Manor Lane in Jamesport, this property is improved with a barn and a small fruit stand, and is presently farmed as an orchard.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Meyer

The Town purchased the development rights on 4.6 acres of a 5.1-acre parcel on the south side of Sound Avenue in Baiting Hollow that is currently used as a sheep farm. It is currently used as a sheep farm

and is enhanced by two restored barns that were part of the original 19th century Barber Farm. Adjacent to the DiMola horse farm, it is surrounded by already protected farmland parcels.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Cichanowicz

The Cichanowicz family sold development rights on 10+ acres located on the northeast corner of Northville Turnpike and Doctors Path that is currently planted in sod. An offer from a developer had been accepted for this property but the Peconic Land Trust was able to broker a partnership where the Town purchased the development rights and a grower purchased the restricted agricultural land for the same price that the developer had offered.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Crowder

Development rights on 22 acres of a 24-acre property on the north side of Route 25A in Calverton were sold to the Town at a bargain sale, allowing the Town to save more than \$60,000 on the purchase of development rights. The owner may be able to receive a charitable gift for the difference between the fair market value and the value of the sale that can be used to offset ordinary income tax or capital gains. Leased to a local grower, the land was planted this season with pumpkins. The acreage is adjacent to a 38-acre agricultural parcel that was previously protected.

#### Town of Riverhead Acquisition - Esposito

The Town acquired 32.7 acres of woodland in fee. Surrounded by farmland previously protected by both Suffolk County and The Town, this parcel has been the subject of numerous subdivision applications and an application was pending at the time the owners agreed to sell to the Town for preservation. The northwestern portion of the property is lightly rolling but drops off steeply at its easterly side with elevations ranging from 25' to 120'. Located on the south side of Sound Avenue in Baiting Hollow, it was the last unprotected parcel in a block of protected farmland that totals hundreds of acres.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Rienzo

The Town purchased development rights on 12 acres of a 16-acre parcel on the south side of Middle Road in Calverton. Currently in use as a horse farm, the site is adjacent to another property where development rights had been sold to the Town.

#### Town of Riverhead Acquisition - Murphy

The Town's first open space purchase using Community Preservation Funds, the property is a 2,400 square foot parcel overlooking the Peconic River on West Main



Street in Riverhead. The land slopes steeply downward towards the river and the removal of a structure on the site will result in an unobstructed river view.

#### Town of Riverhead PDR - Funfgeld

The Town purchased the development rights on 14.5 acres of an 18.5-acre parcel located on the southerly side of Middle Road in Calverton. The land is currently planted in berries, nursery stock and seedling plants. Rights on an adjacent parcel were sold to the Town concurrently with this sale.

#### Suffolk County PDR - Gatz

The County purchased development rights on 32 acres of this 35-acre parcel located on the south side of Sound Avenue in Aquebogue. This land has been farmed by the Gatz family for generations and is currently farmed by a grandson. This parcel is bordered on 3 sides by land previously protected by the County.

#### Town of Riverhead Donation - Bass

This 2.5-acre on the south side of Main Road in Aquebogue was donated to the Town of Riverhead. It has approximately 360 feet of road frontage on Main Road. The property contains plentiful freshwater wetlands which serve as a natural recharge area for runoff from Church Lane.

### **TOWN OF SHELTER ISLAND**

#### Suffolk County/Town of Shelter Island Acquisition (Rasmussen)

A 5.5-acre parcel with 279 feet on NY State Road 114 on Shelter Island, this property is adjacent to the 20-acre Shelter Island Nursery Preserve to the west that was acquired by Suffolk County and the Town in 2001 with facilitation by the Trust. Across Route 114 to the east, the Town owns 36 acres of woodland. The Town plans to use these three parcels, along with other parcels in the area, to create a trail system. Since it is located over the Island's sole source aquifer, protection of this land is critical to the water supply. Zoned business and one-acre residential, the site had the potential for five residences or a mix of business and residential.

#### Oriole Farm Easement

Patrick Parcels gave the Trust a conservation easement on 18.8 acres in the Village of Dering Harbor, land that was formerly owned by the Fisk family. 12.8-acres of the land, including an old orchard, will remain in an open, undeveloped, and scenic state while the remainder of 6 acres may be developed with no more than three residences. Located over a sole source aquifer, restricting development on this land aids in the protection and maintenance of the area's water quality.

### **TOWN OF SOUTHAMPTON**

#### Town of Southampton and Village of Quogue - Karlo

The site is adjacent to a Town and Village 2002 acquisition of 1+ acres that protected significant wildlife habitat. This 1-acre acquisition further helps to preserve the Village character and provide passive recreational opportunities to local residents.

#### Suffolk County/Town of Southampton/Village of Quogue - Greeff

This joint bargain sale acquisition protected 4.8 acres on Dune Road, located in the Village of Quogue Critical Environmental Area. The wetland site had the development potential of one residence.

#### Suffolk County/Town of Southampton/Village of Quogue - Rich

This joint bargain sale acquisition protected 11.68 acres on Dune Road, located in the Village of Quogue Critical Environmental Area. The wetland site had the development potential of two residences.

### **TOWN OF SOUTHDOLD**

#### Town of Southold - Nielsen Easement

The Trust facilitated the gift of a conservation easement to the Town on 3.62 acres located within the Fisher's Island Development Corporation district. Overlooking Block Island Sound, with road frontage of 633 feet, the site consists of open meadow and woodland. Instead of two single-family residences, a significant vista of scenic, open space will be protected from development forever.

#### Elak Easement

The Town of Southold purchased the development rights on 24.5 acres of farmland on the Main Road and Peconic Land Trust purchased an overlay easement with funds donated by Russell McCall on the total acreage of 28.5 (a 4-acre area was not included in the Town's PDR acquisition). Funding for this PDR came from the Town's Community Preservation Funds and a grant from the US Department of Agriculture's natural resources conservation service. The conservation effort was facilitated by the Trust working with the Town's land preservation department.



Photo: Marsha Kenry

(l. to r.) John Elak, Jr., John Elak, Town of Southold Supervisor Josh Horton, and Anne Elak at a press conference celebrating the protection of their farmland.

#### Peconic Bluffs Preserve

Peconic Bluffs Preserve consists of 9 acres located in Peconic. In the midst of heavy residential development and is considered an important neighborhood "greenspace." It was purchased by the Trust with funding from a private donor and through the sale of a conservation easement to the Town of Southold.

#### Wolf Preserve

Farmed for many years, this 25-acre site on Great Hog Neck was allowed to revert to a natural state by the owner, Leonor Wolf. Prior to Mrs. Wolf's demise, she made arrangements with the Trust for a testamentary gift that would leave her home to her heirs and the remainder of her land to the Trust so that it will be forever protected from development. The site includes a wetlands system, meadow and upland area.

#### Town of Southold PDR - Rutkoski

The Trust facilitated the purchase of development rights on 27.7 acres that are adjacent and contiguous to 38 protected acres. With approximately 500 feet of road frontage, the land is visible from Rt. 25 (Main Road) and CR 48, and is also located within the vicinity of more than 455 protected acres.

## Quail Hill Farm News

When I began this letter, the asclepius was alive and flashing with orange blossoms in the meadow between our vegetable crops and the orchard, a cluster of brilliant suns radiating from the timothy, orchard grass, and milkweed. I had always thought that this self-sown “butterfly weed” preferred dry conditions, but in this wet, wet year our wild meadow has been illumined by the deep orange flowering buds preferred by monarchs. Now, the flowering aspect of this plant has disappeared, and the monarchs will move on to another favorite, milkweed, whose bitter sap protects the butterfly from predators. Because of abundant rainfall, the milkweed towers over grasses and other weeds, the seedpods growing full and hanging like bells from the tall stems. In this season butterflies dance above the tangle of honeysuckle and bittersweet and descend for a drink among a forest of seedpods.

Believe it or not, it wasn't until August that we began watering, here on the hill and in the valley. Still, our more elaborate watering-reel, which we normally use on the larger fields along Town Lane, has yet to be moved out of winter storage in the farm shop. Last year we received 1/2 inch of rain

over the course of the primary growing season; this year in June alone we received over 8 inches of rain, and we watched on occasion as soil and plants were moved by the water washing through the fields. Patience and adaptability assist the gardener or farmer to slosh through the rivulets that carry away his or her seeds, or to patter through the dust of silt loam, praying for dark clouds.

At this year's Peconinic, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Peconic Land Trust, right here at Quail Hill, we had the chance to look back at the record of land preservation and community agriculture in North Amagansett. Deborah Ann Light's gift of twenty acres in 1989, that led to the founding of one of the first Community Supported Agriculture projects in the country, has also served as the foundation for protecting an additional 650 acres of land, stretching from Side Hill Road and Deep Lane to Springs Fireplace, involving prime farmland soils, open meadows, and deep beech woods. Quail Hill Farm membership has grown to about 200 families, and beyond the vegetables, or, because of them, we welcome lots of kids, school programs, apprentices from

many places, Americorps volunteers, and ordinary citizens seeking refuge among the cosmos.

This year, we planted a long bed of flowers in the upper, southern corner of the hill field. My favorite is there, the one with the unfortunate name, Scabiosa, so let's refer to it by another name, pincushion flower. The gardener sows the seeds, and then stands back to see what variety of lavender, white, and deep red will emerge to sway on the long stems. If you walk in among the flowering plants, carefully, you may encounter a kind of double exposure—the pincushion colors are matched by the shades and various shapes of butterflies, feeding on the flowers. Because this farm exists, and because we adhere to organic practices, a multitude of insects, part of the community, feed on our forest of milkweed pods and then touch down on the deep maroon flowers speckled with lavender buds, on the hill . . . seeds planted for our farm members, and in support of the dance.

- Scott Chaskey,  
Quail Hill Preserve Manager

Photo: Marsha Kenny



Funded by a grant from the Heckscher Foundation for Children, the Trust's Quail Hill Farm hosted children from the Child Development Center of the Hamptons in a summer program that focused on respect for the land and conservation of our natural resources.



Photo: Barbara DiLorenzo

Quail Hill's Great Tomato Taste Off Celebrated its 6th Year in early September with a tasting of 37 varieties of tomatoes—all grown at Quail Hill. Well over 250 people came, tasted, and rated, exclaiming and deliberating and comparing. The results once again confirm that cherry tomatoes pack a lot of taste in a small package. The top four rated tomatoes were, in descending order, Sun Gold, White Currant, Matt's Wild Cherry, and Dr. Carolyn—all cherries and its ancestor, the currant tomato. Just for the record, 75 people gave Sun Gold the highest rating of 5; 68 people gave White Currant a 5; and 57 gave Matt's a 5. Many volunteers, too numerous to list here, worked very hard to make the Great Tomato Taste Off a fun event. Mother Nature, who teased us with forecasts of more rain, gave us a beautiful day. Don't miss next year's Taste Off!

Photo: Denise Markut



Jim McMahon, Town of Southold Director of Community Development, makes friends with a box turtle, one of Dam Pond's many inhabitants.



Photo: Marsha Kenny

Celebrating the official opening of Dam Pond Maritime Preserve in mid-summer were (l. to r.) Kim Prokop, Suffolk County Parks Trustee/Southold; Town of Southold Land Preservation Coordinator Melissa Spiro; Town of Southold Director of Community Development Jim McMahon; Town of Southold Supervisor Josh Horton; Suffolk County Legislator Michael J. Caracciolo; Suffolk County Parks Commissioner Judy Gordon; PLT Vice President Timothy Caulfield; James Richter, Town of Southold Engineering Department, and PLT President John v.H. Halsey.

Photo: Marsha Kenny



Congressman Timothy Bishop joined state and local officials and environmentalists to announce the legislation he is co-sponsoring that will allow farmers to sell their development rights under an installment payment program.

## Legislation to Ease Tax Burden for Farmers

Congressmen Timothy Bishop and Amo Houghton are co-sponsoring legislation that will clarify the federal tax code to allow farmers who sell development rights to municipalities under an installment payment program to pay the income taxes on the proceeds of the sale on the same basis. Currently, farmers who opt for the deferred payment program must pay, in the year of the sale, capital gains taxes on the full sale price of the development rights. As a result, many farmers are advised against selling

their development rights. A deferred payment plan for the municipality is preferable since it allows conservation purchases to be spread out over time. If income taxes are deferred for the seller, the farmer won't have to worry about cash flow problems. A farmer who sells development rights to a municipality or a nonprofit organization such as Peconic Land Trust, holds title to the property but cannot develop it.



**PECONIC LAND TRUST**  
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**Mission Statement**

The Peconic Land Trust is a nonprofit, tax-exempt conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of farmland and open space on Long Island. To this end, the Trust acquires and manages land as well as easements for conservation purposes. In addition, the Trust assists farmers and other landowners and municipalities in the identification and implementation of alternatives to full-yield development.

**STAFF**

- John v.H. Halsey, *President*
- Julie Zaykowski, *Executive Associate*
- Timothy J. Caufield, *Vice President*
- Rebecca A. Chapman, *Vice President of Philanthropy*
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