

field, forest & fen



Connecting People with the Healthy Lands and Clean Waters that Sustain Us

CONSERVATION SPIRIT

10,000th Acres of Conservation Across the Counties

Otsego Land Trust passes the prestigious 10,000 acres protected mark.



Land Trust Executive Director Virginia Kennedy, Stewardship Manager, Marcie Foster, and Land Protection Project Manager, Ethan Rubenstein with Joe and Alice Richardson, whose easement put the land trust over 10,000 acres protected.

This July, Otsego Land Trust passed the prestigious 10,000 acres protected landmark! We did it with a flourish protecting land in four counties: Otsego, Herkimer, Delaware, and Schoharie.

OLT formed in the winter of 1987-1988, when a small group of people who shared a deep passion for conserving

the healthy lands and pristine waters of the Otsego Region decided to act upon their commitment to land protection. In November 1988, that early group, Kent Barwick, George Snell, and Earle Peterson, officially incorporated Otsego Land Trust as a charitable corporation.

Dorothy Campbell, whose life spanned three centuries, became the first local landowner to partner with the OLT. Dorothy's gift of a conservation easement on her land ensured the protection of Leatherstocking Falls and nearly one hundred acres of property overlooking Otsego Lake.

And here we are 27 years and thousands of acres later. Because of the generosity and conservation ethic of our supporters and landowners, OLT has established itself as a regional land trust and a powerhouse for conservation.

"Reaching this milestone is a credit to 27 years of good work by the whole community in partnership with OLT," explains Harry Levine, OLT Board Chair, "The entire board and staff are excited about this achievement. We feel empowered by our growing number of supporters to reach even higher to

continued on page 3

CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT

Young Minds and Conservation Hearts

Every summer, our OLT family grows: Four new faces with minds eager for learning join our team. They are our summer interns. Through the generous funding of two donors, we are able to offer paid internship positions. Students interested in volunteering also get involved.

This spring nearly 50 well-qualified and inspiring students applied. Making final decisions was difficult with so many excellent applicants. We encourage all of these wonderful students to apply again.

If you didn't get a chance to meet the extraordinary young people we hired, let us introduce them.

Shannon Donahue Salisbury Mills, NY

Shannon is junior at SUNY Oneonta. Upon graduation in December, Shannon will graduate with a Bachelor's in Environmental Science and a second Bachelor's in Psychology. She was one of our stewardship associate interns this summer and partnered with Spencer O'Bryan to complete monitoring and stewardship visits of OLT's protected properties.

continued on page 3



Interns Shannon Donahue and Spencer O'Bryan on the job.



Otsego Land Trust conserves our natural heritage of woodlands, farmlands, and waters that sustain rural communities, promote public health, support wildlife diversity and inspire the human spirit.

Board of Directors

Harry Levine
CHAIRMAN

John Carnahan
VICE CHAIRMAN

Richard Blabey
TREASURER

Frank Kolbert
SECRETARY

Kent L. Barwick
David T. Bliss
Henry S.F. Cooper, Jr.
Martha Frey
Carla Hall Friedman
J. Joseph Homburger
Bruce Johnson
C. R. Jones
Marjorie Kellogg
Don Raddatz
Joanne Tobey
Gilbert T. Vincent, PhD
Caleb Wertenbaker

Legal Counsel

Robert Besancency

Directors Emeriti

J. Michael Moffat
Earle N. Peterson
George Snell

Staff

Virginia Kennedy
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Marcie Foster
STEWARDSHIP MANAGER

Sara Scheeren
OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Ethan Rubenstein
LAND PROTECTION PROJECT MANAGER

Emily Monahan
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Otsego Land Trust is partially funded by the New York Conservation Partnership Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program with support from the State of New York. A copy of Otsego Land Trust's annual financial report may be obtained upon request from our office or from the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau. ATTN: FOIL Officer, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.



The OLT staff, Sara Scheeren, Virginia Kennedy, Marcie Foster, Ethan Rubenstein and Emily Monahan.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Staying Connected

I realize most of you, our OLT community, know by now that I'm leaving New York; that my husband's work is taking us to Maryland. Good-byes are hard. So I'll leave farewells aside and focus on gratitude instead.

I am grateful to the OLT community, donors and supporters, who, in the almost three years since I've been here, have embraced me and the land trust and our conservation message with such enthusiasm.

I am grateful to our landowners, those who protected their land before I arrived and those with whom I've worked while I've been here. You have created an incredible and invaluable legacy of healthy land and clean water for the community and for future generations.

I am grateful to my staff, Marcie, Sara, Ethan, and Emily, truly special young people whose hearts are focused not on making tons of money and collecting tons of stuff, but on a conservation ethic that compels them to lives dedicated to protecting our land and water.

I am grateful to OLT's board of directors, volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to ensuring the land trust meets its mission year after year.

I am grateful to all OLT volunteers who give up time and talent to help OLT with programs and stewardship; our successes would be considerably less without you.

The Haudenosaunee say: "We are a part of everything that is beneath us, above us and around us. Our past is our present, our present is our future, and our future is seven generations past and present."

I believe those words; that we are all in this together. As humans, rich, poor, of different cultures, countries or creeds, we share a common destiny where the health of our planet—our Mother Earth as the Haudenosaunee would say—is concerned.

Whether I am here at the source of the Susquehanna, the headwaters of the Chesapeake Watershed, or in Maryland where the Susquehanna empties into the Chesapeake Bay, we are all connected. I'm grateful for that connection and to know that as I work at my end of the river, the OLT community will be working here to protect the land and water that sustain all our lives.

Virginia
Virginia Kennedy
Executive Director



A Simple Way to Support OLT Like us on Facebook!

We want to see 1,000 Facebook followers by the end of the year!

Conservation Spirit — continued from page 1

promote conservation in our region.”

Part of the 10,000-plus acres protected makes up OLT’s Blueway. The Blueway is a series of lands along the water that contribute to protecting the vast Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Beginning with Deowongo Island in Canadarago Lake, down Oaks Creek to Brookwood Point on Otsego Lake, and to Compton Bridge on the Susquehanna, Blueway lands are open for free public access. OLT provides free public access and free education programs at these special places to encourage a real connection between people and the lands and waters that sustain our lives.

“OLT’s three-pronged approach to conservation—conservation easements, free public access sites, and free conservation education programming—advances what we call *community conservation*,” explains OLT Executive



Joe Richardson enjoys the stream running through his recently protected Butternut Valley property.

Director Virginia Kennedy, “Community conservation means promoting a conservation ethic in everyone and asking the whole community to connect to and take care of the land and water that take care of us. Our landowners who have protected their lands are leaders in promoting community

conservation and in generating an ethic of caring for what Indigenous peoples so lovingly call Mother Earth.”

OLT’s success will continue to evolve. We look forward to the years ahead and to partnering with our regional community to protect the next 10,000 acres! ■

Conservation Spotlight — continued from page 1

Spencer O’Bryan
Cooperstown, NY

Spencer is a sophomore at Carleton College in Minnesota, studying Prospective Geology with an anticipated graduation date of June 2017. Spencer was a stewardship associate intern and worked with Shannon to do conservation easement monitoring and Blueway public access site stewardship. He came to OLT fresh off a study abroad program that sent him to Lima, Peru for cultural exchange and language study.

Gina Profetto
Syracuse, NY

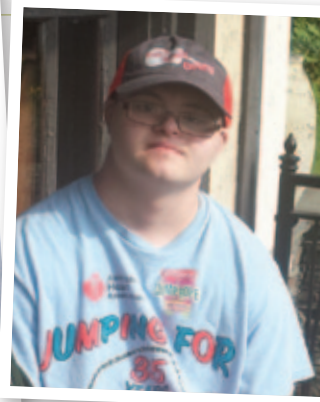
Gina began her final year at Hartwick College this fall. She is completing a rigorous 3 year Bachelor’s degree program in Biology with an environmental science and policy minor. She has studied the effects of nitrogen fixation on plant growth and medicinal plant growth and usage in Northern Thailand. Gina took the lead at Brookwood Garden focusing her time on invasive species eradication and natives implementation.



Natalie Shea and Gina Profetto at Brookwood.

Natalie Shea
Guilderland, NY

Natalie graduated from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Systems. She volunteered for OLT donating over 180 hours to complete her college credits. Natalie helped OLT with outreach and education, working at Brookwood Garden and participating at the Tuesday Trail Nights with our volunteer stewardship team.



Nicholas Campbell smiling after a job well done.

Nicholas Campbell
Pathfinder Village, Edmeston, NY

Nicholas spent Monday and Wednesday mornings working hard at Brookwood Gardens weeding, watering, and helping to make the gardens beautiful.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our interns and to the donors who make our internship program possible.

We bid our interns a fond farewell and wish them well as they continue lives dedicated to conservation. ■

Here's to the Newest Members of Our Land Owner Family

Along with their predecessors, they got us to 10,000 protected acres and we're already on our way to the next 10,000!



Cat Gareth Sidney, Delaware County

You could say that [the land] was the architect of its own conservation because, by learning what it taught me, I came to value it enough to preserve it and allow it to evolve undisturbed and educate others.



Tanner Hill West Fulton, Schoharie County

My intent is to preserve a pristine mountain — with all its beauty, wildlife, vegetation, and active watershed — for future generations as a gift back to my beloved Schoharie County.

– Landowner of Tanner Hill property.



Joe & Alice Richardson MZURI MEADOWS Morris, Otsego County

Through a conservation easement with the Otsego Land Trust, we seek to ensure that this marvelous, diverse landscape persists in its richness and beauty, as a haven for native wildlife as well as for human generations beyond our own to treasure in their turn.



Timothy & Kathleen Peters LESTER'S FLAT Exeter, Otsego County

By seeking a conservation easement, we also wish to connect our property with broader regional efforts to protect upstate New York's ecosystems, natural resources, and agricultural heritage.



Marjorie Kellogg & Barbara Newman Franklin, Delaware County

Protecting my land is like a connection to the future – when I can no longer do it, OLT will be there looking out for the health and welfare of this piece of land I’ve loved since the moment I set eyes on it forty years ago.



– Marjorie Kellogg

This property allows me to explore a glorious wilderness that differs in so many valuable ways from my home [in the city]. The privilege of ownership carries with it a serious obligation to the land itself, to maintain it in its natural state so that it can regenerate indefinitely.

– Barbara Newman



Ken Richards & Connie Young STOCK FARM Van Hornesville, Herkimer County



Working together with the remarkable staff at OLT we now feel that our intentions to preserve the increasingly rare swaths of wild, natural and open habitat will endure.



Maryanne Whelan & Frank Novak Otsego, Otsego County

I hope [my land] will remain such a place always, with only the most modest intrusion of one of our species, and that done as a respectful joining and cohabiting. To quote Thoreau – “In wildness is the Preservation of the World.”

– Mary Anne Whelan

The first time I walked the property I spent 3 hours exploring and walking the boundary. It seemed to be what I was looking for so I stayed for the sunset and it was then as the sun went down that I fell in love with the property and realized it was exactly what I’ve been looking for, for all these years.

– Frank Novak



Gail Sondergaard BASSWOOD FARM Decatur, Otsego County

It’s wonderful to be able to protect the land and water and also to be able to give the example to my granddaughter, so she knows we all need to participate in protecting the environment for future generations.





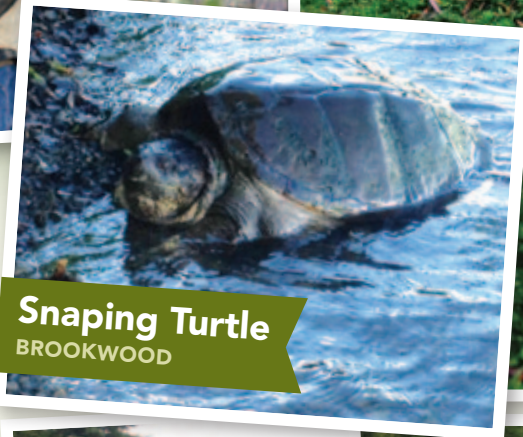
Me and my volunteer stewardship team.

FROM THE FIELD

Stewardship Snapshot

MARCIE FOSTER – Stewardship Manager

“I have enjoyed visiting many new places and many familiar places this year as I monitored our easement properties or just enjoyed our Blueway public access sites in my free time. Enjoy this snapshot of photos I took while working and playing in our beautiful region.”



Snapping Turtle
BROOKWOOD

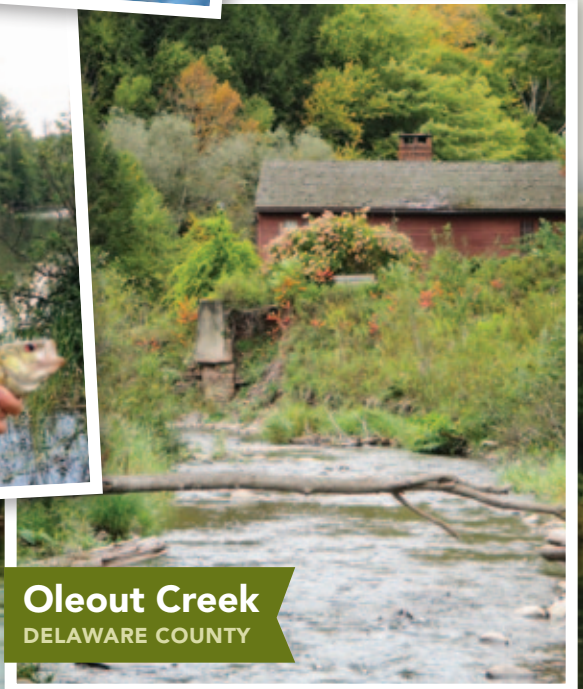


Mushrooms
BUTTERNUT VALLEY



Bass
PARSLOW

My husband, Mike, with a fish from Oaks Creek.



Oleout Creek
DELAWARE COUNTY



Merganser Family
DEOWONGO ISLAND

2015 Photo Contest: "Focus on Our Furry Friends"

SARA GELBER – Outreach Coordinator

I have a cat. Not just any cat. A buff colored tabby with huge amber eyes. His name is Dingy — and he is an absolute riot!

He's not much for talking, except for the rare occasion that he does indeed have something to say, something loud and incessant, usually at 4 o'clock in the morning.

He's a fearless greeter of anyone who comes up our driveway, meaning he tries to nip at vehicle tires and once your vehicle has come to a stop, he hops onto your hood, makes himself comfortable and unblinkingly stares through the windshield until you come out.

He assumes the role of a hat when I finally get curled up in bed, he forms a crescent on my pillow around my head-my cat hat. The purring usually lulls me to sleep.

If able to reach my neck, he will put both paws on my shoulders and nuzzle in, a hug.

But the most tell-tale Dingy characteristic is his love of the wild outdoors. We joke about needing a cat door, rather than a doggie door, because he is worse than a 5 year old child, in-out, in-out, in-out.

He spends the majority of his time roaming the property, staring into the



pond eyeing the fish, lurking beneath the birdfeeder (that had to be positioned higher to deter bird snacks), watching my daughter Harper play in the yard from aloft in a tree, attacking his own shadow in the sun and batting at the towels drying on the line.

This summer he was a favorite subject of my camera. If you have a pet, no matter fur, hair, scales, shell, fins, and have photos of them enjoying some time outside, please consider submitting them to our annual photo contest. This year's theme is "Focus on Our Furry Friends", but that means any pet, furry or not. We are so excited that the Susquehanna Animal Shelter is co-sponsoring with us and we cannot wait to see your four-legged, no-legged, or something in between in action! ■



STAFF RECOMMENDED READING

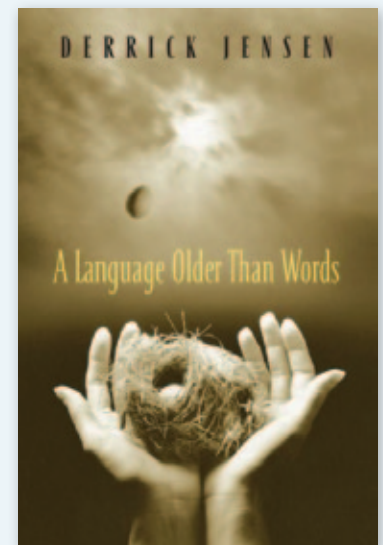
A Language Older Than Words: Derrick Jensen

EMILY MONAHAN – Administrative Assistant

When I have an hour or so, I often read a chapter in *A Language Older than Words*, by Derrick Jensen. The memoir's theme has a conservation ethic the OLT community shares: Connecting people to the lands and waters that sustain us.

Jensen advises us that re-connecting to the non-human natural world around us is necessary for survival and to save an environment at risk of permanently degrading. His richly descriptive, personal and poetic stories communicate a vision of an earth that cannot lose its enchantment even as it has been exploited and harmed by industrial civilization. We are biologically and evolutionarily connected to all living things because our personal habits and conveniences (food systems, energy, travel, clothing, etc.) affect and are affected by all living things.

As humans, our collective actions have initiated the sixth great extinction in the history of the planet. We must acknowledge our responsibility to steward our lives well in connection to all living beings. Otherwise, we as a civilization may collapse under the problems we, ourselves, create. ■





Post Office Box 173
Cooperstown, New York 13326

Would you like to receive the newsletter by email instead of mail?

To save paper and trees, please call us at (607) 547-2366 or email info@otsegoandtrust.org to request electronic copies only.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun. October 18 – Advanced Hike

Greenwoods Conservancy (Access on event day only.)

4+ mile hike over varying terrain and topography.

Sun. November 1 – Brookwood Garden Clean Up

Brookwood Garden

Community fall clean up and harvest snacks

Mon. November 9 – Film Days Hike

Weaver Pond, Richfield Springs

(Access on event day only.)

Hike led by Bill Isaacs highlighting the land's cultural and historical features.

Sun. January – Ski/Snowshoe Trek

Marion Karl Property (Access on event day only.)

Trek through beautiful winter forests.

Visit OtsegoLandTrust.org for more information.



OUR NATURAL COMMUNITY

Carnivorous Plants

ETHAN RUBENSTEIN – *Land Protection Project Manager*

Did you know that New York State has 19 species of carnivorous plants? They consist of four major groups: pitcher plants, sundews, bladderworts and butterworts. Sundews and butterworts catch their prey using flypaper or adhesive traps, while bladderworts use water-filled bladders as traps and pitcher plants use pitfalls.

These plants have evolved to capture prey due to the fact that they live in nutrient-poor and wet habitats where nitrogen, needed for plant growth, is extremely limited. Being able to extract nitrogen from small animals allows these unique plants to get the nutrients they need to survive in nutrient-poor habitats such as wetlands and bogs. ■

