



# Conservation News

Protecting Open Space on Long Island's North Shore

## NORTH SHORE LAND ALLIANCE

Volume 16, Issue 30

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Photo credit: Diana Lutz

## Protecting Habitat for Plants, Animals and People

Earth is losing biodiversity at an alarming rate. There's been an average 60 percent decline in mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians globally since 1970, according to the World Wildlife Fund's Living Planet Report 2018. While climate change and pollution are contributors, the number one driving force behind the catastrophic decline in species is habitat loss. Habitat is defined as the natural home of plants and animals.

When most people think of biodiversity, they think of large undisturbed habitats like the rain forests of the Amazon or the temperate forests of Alaska. What you may not know is that we have rich biodiversity here too. One of the most, if not the most, biodiverse areas left in Nassau County is in the Beaver Brook watershed located in our own backyard!

Beaver Brook flows through Shu Swamp and is home to brown trout, sticklebacks and the rare American brook lamprey. The shallow pond provides mud flats for shore birds and the tall trees habitat for nesting great horned owls and wood ducks. Birds like the ruby-throated hummingbird and the winter wren are joined by harvester and Appalachian brown butterflies in making this area their home. Brook trout breed in Beaver Brook and mammals like the river otter, American mink and muskrat can be spotted there too.

(Continued on p. 3)



Dear Friends,

In my nearly 17 years at the Land Alliance, I've never been more excited about starting a new year! 2019 was a much-needed building year for our team. We were able to catch up and ramp up for what's ahead – and what's ahead is both exciting and inspiring.

**First, after more than three years of fundraising efforts, we are poised to retire our debt on the Humes property at year end.** As much as we wanted to jump in and start "fixing up the place", our commitments to

our lenders had to be fulfilled first. While we knew acquiring the Humes property was the right thing to do (even if we had to take on debt), we did not realize how hard it would be to continue fundraising when a property has already been protected, effectively. Many thanks to our great friends who jumped in at the end to help us reach this critical goal.

**Second, we can finally begin to make the improvements necessary to open the Humes property to the public in 2020.** As you will see throughout this issue of *Conservation News*, we've not been sitting idly by as to the Humes property. Rather, we have been hard at work making plans for the day we could start the restoration process. We've written grants, documented the property's history, developed a master plan, mapped trails, secured cost estimates for improvements, cleared the meadow for planting and much, much more!

We are prepared and ready to get going. As an organization, we can hardly express how excited we are to 1) move on with restoring the Humes property, but, even more importantly, 2) begin to look for new conservation opportunities! In these times, protect more land we must!

In October, Land Alliance staff attended the 2019 Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Rally, a national gathering of 1,600+ people involved in conservation. LTA President Andrew Bowman reminded us about the important role land conservation plays in mitigating the impacts of climate change. It could account for more than 20% of the solution if we can prevent lands from being developed and better manage forests and agriculture.

Currently, the national land trust community protects about one million acres of land per year. If we are to be a significant part of the solution to climate change, we need to step up the pace of land conservation dramatically and we need to do it now. Recent studies suggest that we do not have 20 to 30 years to figure this out, as originally predicted. Rather, we have the next 10 to 15 years to make a significant difference. And the decisions we make in our lives today are going to determine our future and that of the planet.

May your last weeks of 2019 be filled with happy moments, loving families and friends and renewed energy to make our world a better place. And may your 2020 be a winner!

Yours in conservation,

*Lisa W. Ott*

Lisa W. Ott, President and CEO



(continued from pg. 1)

The swamp's high-quality environment hosts an amazing array of ephemeral spring flowers, such as trout lily, marsh marigold, dwarf ginseng and spring beauty. An abundance of ferns as well as rare plants, such as the shrub hearts-a-bustin', found nowhere else in New York State, can be found there. Plants like turtlehead, dog and primrose violets as well as the state endangered American strawberry bush can be found there, along with noteworthy or rare plants like squawroot, hops, red trillium, pinesap, umbrella and sweet bay magnolia and the ancient tupelo.

It is no accident that both plants and animals have been able to survive and thrive in this natural environment. First, through the foresight and hard work of a group of citizens who formed the North Shore Wildlife Sanctuary, the 60 acres which is now called the Charles T. Church Shu Swamp Preserve were protected in 1963. More recently in an effort to prevent further fragmentation, the surrounding areas comprised of the adjoining Humes and Smithers properties were bought by the Land Alliance and Nassau County, respectively, to ensure this important habitat remain intact.

And, the Shu Swamp conservation area is just one of many protected habitats in our community. Whether it be the sweetgum trees at the Hope Goddard Iselin preserve, brimming with orange, yellow and burgundy leaves, or the great American chestnut tree at Fox Hollow, our North Shore habitat is not only beautiful but critical to the many species whose lives depend on the protection of these lands.

To ensure a sustainable future for all living things, we urgently need to curb the loss of natural habitat and remember that protecting nature also helps protect people. Every acre of open space lost to development is another acre of habitat lost forever.

Please contact the Land Alliance at 516-922-1028 if you are interested in protecting your land for the plants and animals.



## MacDonald Donation Strategic Village Parcel Conserved



The Land Alliance is pleased to announce the donation of the 193 Underhill Road property in Matinecock. The parcel, consisting of 2.3 acres, was given to the Land Alliance by Mr. and Mrs. James MacDonald and family.

The MacDonalds are residents of Locust Valley where they have operated M&A Landscaping for many years. The property served as an auxiliary nursery for their business but also became a quiet refuge for the family. Among the commercial shrubbery, the Macdonalds planted beds of everything from leeks to watermelons to grapes. They would invite friends and neighbors

to share in the harvest or simply enjoy an evening under the whimsical pergola blanketed in grapevines. When the family decided it was time to part ways with the property, they saw an opportunity for local conservation.

The MacDonalds' generosity has ensured the permanent preservation of the property for the enjoyment of nature and open space. The Land Alliance looks forward to working with the community to identify just the right use!

## Mayrock Donation Beautiful Habitat Protected



The Land Alliance will begin 2020 on a high note with the planned land donation of six vacant and wooded acres at 395 Duck Pond Road.

In August of 2019, Mr. Isidore Mayrock approached the Land Alliance to discuss donating this parcel of land, which he retained during the sale of his family's home on a separate adjacent lot. Having raised their three children in Matinecock, Mr. and Mrs. Mayrock recall strolling the trails of Shu Swamp as a family. The Duck Pond Road property was a special place for the Mayrocks, who enjoyed walking its paths

through vibrant laurel and copper beech trees and rhododendron clusters.

The Mayrocks and the Land Alliance see their property as a complementary parcel to the area's existing preserves, helping to connect Cushman Woods, Humes and Shu Swamp, and ensuring the protection of natural habitat for the area's plants and animals. This generous donation builds on what has been a successful conservation effort in Matinecock, securing the natural beauty of the community for future generations.

## The Importance of Wildlife Corridors



Plants and animals do not understand the boundaries of fences and property lines as they are searching for food and shelter and a safe place to live. As habitat continues to be fragmented, degraded and lost to development, the need for a coordinated, connected network is growing. Better habitat connectivity will allow wildlife to migrate and disperse throughout, boost biodiversity and resilience in degraded ecosystems, safeguard genetic flow between populations and ensure species are better able to adapt to our changing climate.

The connections among the Stroll Garden and Smithers Connector parcels, together with the North Shore Wildlife Sanctuary's adjoining Shu Swamp Preserve and Nassau County-owned Upper Francis Pond are a perfect example of a wildlife corridor. The parcels now total approximately 150 contiguous acres!

If you look across the Humes meadow, you may catch a glimpse of a white-tailed deer just before he bounces off into the Shu Swamp Preserve without missing a step. Rabbits, spotted salamanders and wood frogs are now able to traverse through a meadow, woodlands and wetlands. Red-tailed hawks, screech owls, ruby-throated hummingbirds and black-capped chickadees

now have larger landscapes to call their home. These critters move both daily and seasonally to reach food, water, shelter and breeding sites. Without this wildlife corridor, these animals would be required to travel over dangerous roads and through potentially unfriendly backyards to reach their destinations.

Creating wildlife corridors has been one of the Land Alliance's primary objectives in acquiring parcels for conservation. And there's nothing that makes us happier than filling in another piece of the puzzle. With the upcoming donation of the 6-acre Mayrock property off Duck Pond Road, we grow even closer to connecting Cushman Woods to the Humes property and the larger wildlife corridor that extends to Beaver Dam Pond and the Long Island Sound. We thereby provide another safe haven for the plants and animals that surround us.

Private conservation plays a critical role in growing the amount of habitat preserved. That preservation plays a vital role in maintaining and restoring ecological processes. Increasing and improving conservation of private lands, in alignment with set national and state level conservation goals, will not only work to



counteract the decline of biodiversity but also make private lands more resilient to climate change and capable of sustaining the ecosystem services on which both current and future residents will depend.

Thankfully, this need has not gone unnoticed in the U.S. Congress. This October, the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act of 2019 was introduced with bipartisan support. If passed, the Act will provide significant funding to restore habitat and protect America's native wildlife by establishing a National Wildlife Corridors Program. The program will designate wildlife corridors on federal lands and provide grants to maintain them elsewhere. Because fragmentation of habitat has been identified as a significant threat to wildlife, it is now more critical than ever that we continue to connect and link parcels of land right here in our own community.



If you have a parcel of land that might be suitable for creating or adding to a wildlife corridor, please give the Land Alliance a call at (516) 922-1028.



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the vector data provided by MapUniverse

# Humes Updates



Land Alliance staff have been working hard over the past several months on various projects at the Humes Preserve. It has been exciting to see these projects take shape, with the goal of opening the Preserve to the public in the spring of 2020.

## We've Got A Plan

Working with Patricia O'Donnell and her team at Heritage Landscapes, we are pleased to report the completion of a Master Plan (Plan) for the Humes property. The Master Plan will document the Land Alliance's intended use of the property. It will include plans for public access and trails and be helpful in communicating those plans to reviewing entities, community stakeholders and potential funders.

The Plan also documents existing property features through drawings and illustrates five Landscape Character Areas (LCA). The LCAs include: the designed landscapes and former Schmidlapp residence/aka Rumpus House, the open field/future Humes Meadow and Stable Complex, the designed landscapes and Humes residences, the Humes Japanese Stroll Garden

and the native woodland and stream area that runs along Dogwood Lane.

The Land Alliance plans to host a community meeting in winter 2020, where the Plan for the property will be presented and discussed.

## History Revealed

The Land Alliance Stewardship Team tasked our summer interns with clearing the overgrown former rose garden. This intrepid squad made quick work of the project, braving heat and humidity along with various critters that flew, scurried or slithered away to find new homes. Their work revealed the good bones of the rose garden's original infrastructure. The garden was designed by Innocenti and Webel and consisted of a series of circular brick walls and stone paths. Through a generous grant from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program, we were able to implement much needed masonry repairs. The work continued up to the tennis court, where steps and stone were also reset. Lastly, the brick retaining wall in front of the tennis hut was completely restored. The next phase of structural

improvements includes rebuilding the tennis hut, which will become a welcome center, and resurfacing the tennis court to serve as the preserve's parking area.

While these are small initial steps and there are many projects, large and small, that need to be completed, it feels really good to start to breathe new life into this extraordinary place.

### A Meadow Comes Alive

After two years' clearing and weeding at the Humes meadow, we look forward to planting it with winter rye, warm season grasses and a small abundance of native wildflowers in 3.5 acres this fall. While we realize that weeding will be an ongoing necessity, we are delighted to be moving ahead with this critical step. Beginning next year, we will also maintain a meadow trail system (referenced above) that will serve two purposes: 1) provide access for Long Islanders to explore the site and learn about the importance of native plants in supporting birds and other wildlife while engaging in healthy recreation, and 2) discourage invasive plants from encroaching beyond the maintained area.

You may recall that a mere two years ago the site was a jungle of porcelain-berry vine (our biggest and most persistent challenge), mile-a-minute and other invasive species. It also had lots of rubbish that had accumulated over several decades. With support from the Nassau County Soil and Water Conservation District and private donors, we have come a long way in removing a majority of the weeds from the meadow. And thanks to volunteers, including our dedicated stewardship crew and Girl Scouts of America Troop 1805, we have removed nearly all the rubbish! In late summer, we began clearing an additional acre that will be seeded next year as phase 2 of the restoration.

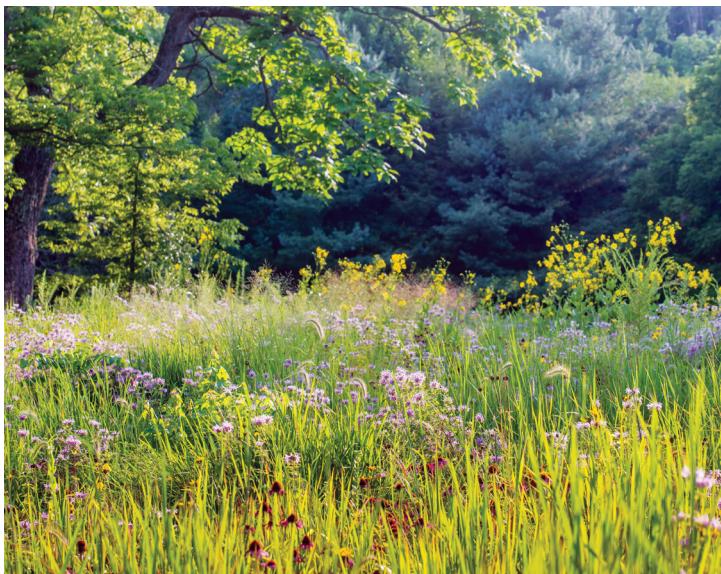
Our goal is to restore the site to a meadow that will support a rich biodiversity of native plants and wildlife by providing stable, quality habitat that requires minimal weed control over time.



Humes Meadow Before



Humes Meadow During



Humes Meadow After

## Trails, Glorious Trails

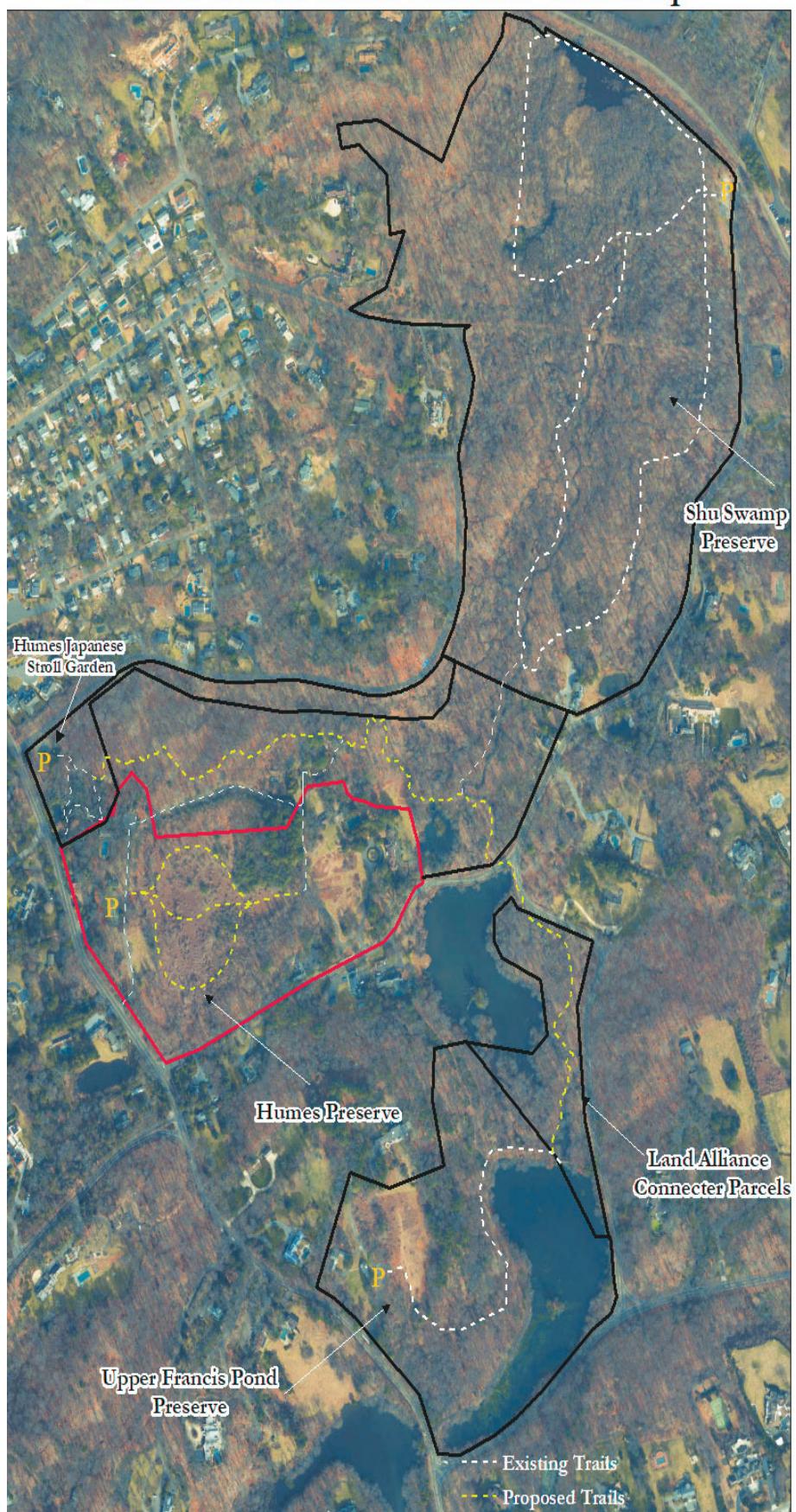


Although Humes will serve as a wonderful standalone preserve, one of its best attributes is its connectivity. Planning is underway for an extensive network of trail systems. The Land Alliance is in the process of developing trails that will connect the Humes Japanese Stroll Garden to the Humes Preserve. Once in the Preserve, visitors can enjoy pathways through the Carter and Suzy Bales Meadow or meander the woodland path. Both will lead down to the Shu Swamp Preserve and across to Upper and Lower Francis Ponds. Upon completion, the system will provide over four miles of contiguous trails.

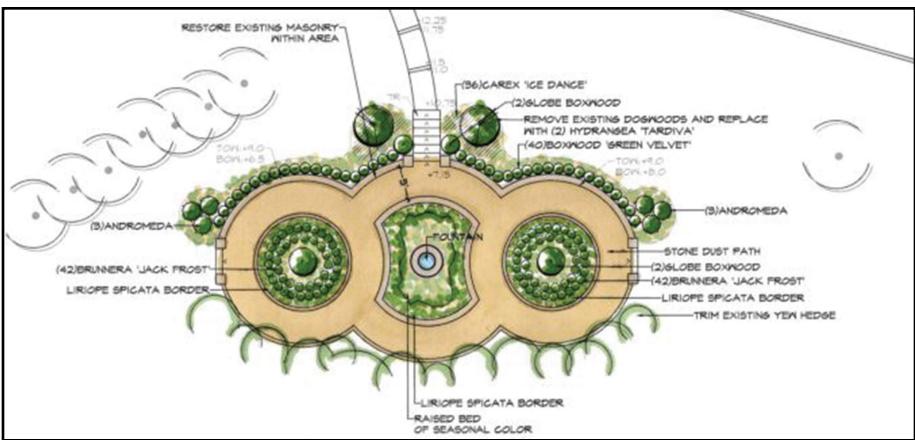
For updates, visit our website at [www.northshorelandalliance.org](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org) or sign up to receive email alerts!

Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very far.

Thomas Jefferson



## What's in a Name



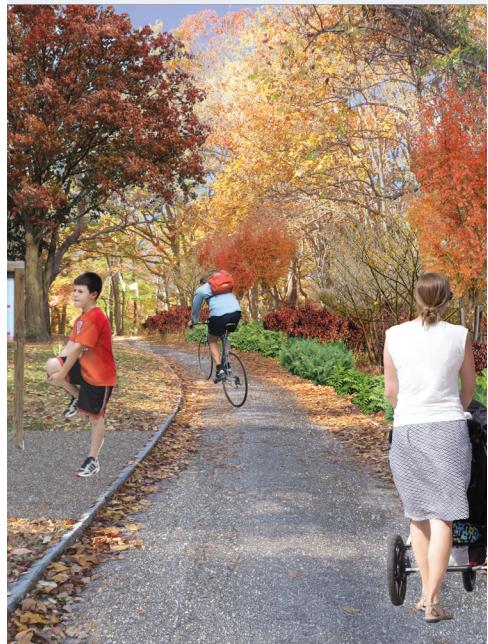
It is so exciting to finally begin to think about making improvements at the Humes property. There are many projects, both large and small, that need to be completed. From resurfacing the parking area to restoring the dogwood allee, and from transforming the historic rose garden into a native plant garden to purchasing native plants and shrubs for the meadow, we need your help.

As the holiday season approaches, please consider making a lasting gift in honor of someone special. For a list of naming opportunities at the Humes property, please see the chart below. For more information, please contact the Land Alliance at 516-922-1028.

### Naming Opportunities at the Humes Property

- Humes Entrance Allee of pink Flowering Trees ..... \$36,000
- Restoration and Planting of the Formal Garden ..... \$30,000
- Restoration and Landscaping of the Welcome Hut ..... \$20,000
- Connector Bridge to Shu Swamp ..... \$20,000
- Resurfacing and Planting the Former Tennis Court/ Proposed Parking Area ..... \$15,000
- Two Connector Bridges to Upper Francis Pond ..... \$12,000  
(Two @ \$12,000 each)
- Installation of Wildflowers at Meadow's Edge ..... \$10,000  
(Ten @ \$10,000 per quarter acre)
- Meadow Garden Benches ..... \$10,000  
(Four @ \$10,000 each)
- Trail Garden Benches ..... \$5,000  
(Six @ \$5,000 each)
- Installation of 30 Shrubs at Meadow's Edge ..... \$5,000  
(Two @ \$5,000 each)
- Preserve Signage ..... \$5,000
- Meadow Trail Head Steps ..... \$2,500
- Native Tree Installation. .... \$1,000  
(30 @ \$1,000 each)

## Coming in 2020: Fitness Trails at the Humes Preserve



Fitness trails not only improve health and physical fitness, but are eco-friendly, available to everyone and help make exercise fun!

Outdoor exercise provides a mental health boost beyond that of an indoor gym. Along with the nature trails planned for the Humes Preserve, we will also be installing a one-mile fitness trail with the help of experienced fitness trainer Carl Wermee of CW Athletes in Locust Valley.

Many thanks to the anonymous donor who has made this improvement possible.

## Land Alliance Earns National Recognition



One thing that unites us as a nation is land: Americans strongly support saving the open spaces we love. Since 2003, North Shore Land Alliance has been doing just that for the people of Long Island's north shore. Now the Land Alliance is proud to announce we have been reaccredited by the national Land Trust Alliance—proving once again that, as part of a network of over 400 accredited land trusts across the nation, we are committed to professional excellence and to maintaining the public's trust in our conservation work.

"Renewing our accreditation shows the Land Alliance's ongoing commitment to permanent land conservation in our community," said Hoyle Jones, Land Alliance Board Chair. "We are a stronger organization than ever for having gone through the rigorous accreditation renewal process. Our strength means special places – such as the Humes property – will be protected forever, making the Village of Mill Neck an even better place for us and our children."

The Land Alliance provided extensive documentation and was subject to a comprehensive third-party evaluation prior to achieving this distinction. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission awarded renewed accreditation, signifying its confidence that North Shore Land Alliance lands will be protected forever. Accredited land trusts now steward almost 20 million acres – the size of Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island combined.

Since the beginning the Land Alliance has protected more than 1,200 of the north shore's most environmentally significant lands – lands that recharge our drinking water, protect our beaches and bays from harmful stormwater runoff, absorb carbon emissions, provide habitat for plants and animals and grow our food.

"It is exciting to recognize the Land Alliance's continued commitment to national standards by renewing this national mark of distinction," said Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Commission. "Donors and partners can trust that the more than 400 accredited land trusts across the country are united behind strong standards and have demonstrated sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance and lasting stewardship."

The North Shore Land Alliance is one of 1,363 land trusts across the United States according to the Land Trust Alliance's most recent National Land Trust Census. A complete list of accredited land trusts and more information about the process and benefits can be found at [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

The Land Alliance is very grateful to our members and friends who said positive things about us during the public comment period of the accreditation process. It takes a village and we are proud to be a part of your tribe.



## \$92,000 in Historic Preservation Grants Received

The Land Alliance was fortunate to receive three grants for preservation projects at the Humes property in Mill Neck. Those grants were:

1) **\$75,000 grant from the Gerry Charitable Trust**, which will allow the Land Alliance to continue to work with Patricia O'Donnell, a nationally recognized historic landscape architect, and her team at Heritage Landscapes, Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners, to develop a Master Plan for the Humes property.

This plan will guide decisions about use, stewardship and restoration of the Humes property. The Master Plan will also be helpful in securing the municipal approvals required to open the property to the public in 2020.

2) **\$5,000 grant from the Northeast Intervention Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation** to assist with development of the Master Plan. It is an honor to have our work at the Humes property endorsed by the National Trust and supported with their maximum grant amount.

3) **\$12,000 grant from The Preservation League of New York State** which will allow us to retain the services of John G. Waite Associates to conduct a Historic Structure Report for the Tavern House. Parts of the house date to 1740s! This report will be the guiding document for the stabilization, rehabilitation and preservation of the structure that is needed to make it safe and functional again. The Preserve New York grant program is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. We want to give additional thanks to the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation for providing funding to Preservation New York for grants such as this. A portion of the Gerry Charitable Trust grant awarded this year will also support the much-needed stabilization of the Tavern House.

Many thanks to these wonderful organizations which contribute so greatly to the cultural and historic fiber of our communities!

### Additional Ways to Help the Land Alliance Protect Critical Natural Areas

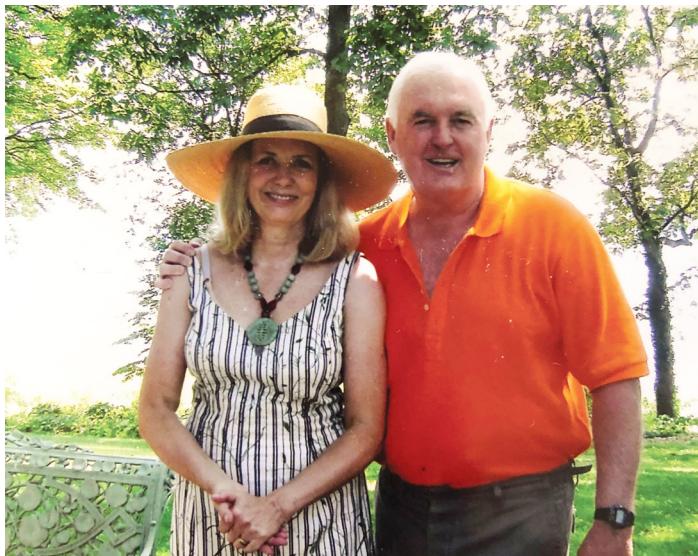
- **PLANNED GIFT** - Providing for the Land Alliance in your estate plans by naming the North Shore Land Alliance as a beneficiary in your will or as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy, retirement plan or Donor-Advised Fund
- **IRA DISTRIBUTION** - At age 70-1/2 you may be able to donate, tax free, all or a portion of your required minimum distribution directly to the Land Alliance
- **DONATE STOCK** - Transferring a gift of appreciated stock directly to the Land Alliance may provide you with significant tax benefits
- **DONOR-ADVISED FUND** - Recommend a gift to the North Shore Land Alliance

Gifts of all types help to permanently protect our community's extraordinary natural areas and can provide donors with many benefits as well.

For more information about other ways to give, please contact Nina Muller at 516-922-1028 or [nina@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:nina@northshorelandalliance.org).



## Carter F. Bales Memoriam and Meadow Dedication



Carter F. Bales, Land Alliance Founding Board Chair, died on July 5, 2019 after a valiant battle with throat cancer.

In his fifteen years as Board Chair, Carter worked really hard, with purpose and dedication, to make this world a better place. He was a big thinker and a big picture kind of guy. He authored major studies of which he was very proud, like *Restoring Moderation to US Politics* and *Containing Climate Change*. He also read and edited every single word of the Land Alliance *Conservation News* – 30 issues in all.

Carter truly cared – about our world, about his friends, about our community and, most importantly, about his wonderful family, whom he loved dearly.

Carter will be remembered for his unstinting dedication to conservation and strong love of place, especially the Adirondacks and the North Shore of Long Island. He

inspired countless people to support environmental causes and his mark will be felt for generations to come. From the emblematic corners of our community like the Youngs Farm Fields to the Smithers Ponds, which are now forever protected under his leadership, to the growing conservation ethic Carter worked so hard to instill in all around him.

Carter was very pleased when the Land Alliance Board chose to dedicate the meadow at the Humes property in his honor on the occasion of his retirement as board chair. Carter requested that a plaque be placed at the meadow that reads as follows:

*"A quiet meadow in honor of Suzanne and Carter Bales, two community leaders on the North Shore. Carter was the Founding Chair of the North Shore Land Alliance in 2003 and served with distinction for 15 years. Suzanne was a noted gardener and writer, also active in promoting conservation and serving the community."*

The contributions made to the Land Alliance in Carter's honor will be used to restore their meadow at Humes, which the Land Alliance plans to open to the public next Spring. We hope you'll hike the meadow often, enjoying its trails, wildflowers, songbirds and butterflies and that you will think of Suzy and Carter when you do.

Carter closed his last email to the Board with the following: *Onward, ever onward. We have many mountains yet to climb.*

Carter will always be in our hearts and an integral part of the Land Alliance's journey.

### Thank You to the Carter F. Bales Memorial Donors

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Castagna  
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Denning  
Mr. and Mrs. David Holmes  
Ms. Holly Holtz  
Ms. Jane Jackson  
Ms. Jane Johnston  
Mr. and Mrs. Hoyle Jones

Mr. Michael Kelcourse  
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Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Schmidlapp  
Mr. Jonathan Silver  
William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil  
Charitable Trust, Mr. Hollis Russell  
and Mr. John Crabill, Trustees

## What If the Sky Fell Silent?



Visit any of our preserves, step out in your backyard for fresh air or take a stroll through town. The one animal you are sure to see or hear, either flying overhead, perched in a tree or pecking at something on the ground is birds. Birds are the most widely distributed species on the planet other than microscopic organisms. Yet their numbers are in trouble. According to a recent study published in the journal Science this September, North America and Canada have approximately three billion fewer birds than in 1970. What is particularly shocking about the 29 percent decline in bird species over the past 50 years is that almost all avian species are on the decline, even common birds like robins and blue jays. Habitat loss, climate change, pesticide use and other human interferences like glass buildings and outdoor cats are thought to be the culprits. According to scientists, humanity is changing the planet and the birds have not been able to adapt.

What if the sky fell silent? Birds are not only remarkable class of species – think of the Emperor penguins and how they starve themselves for months in order to incubate their eggs during harsh Artic winters or how gray gulls are able to hatch and care for their young in the Atacama desert in Chile, one of the driest places on earth – they are extremely important to ecosystems. Birds help with pollination, seed dispersal

and maintaining sustainable levels of their prey. They eat noxious insects and rodents and regenerate forests. We need birds to help protect our habitats.

One in eight bird species is now at risk of extinction. New York State is home to ten endangered species such as the piping plover, black tern and loggerhead shrike. Many of our preserves, like Cushman Woods and Louis C. Clark Sanctuary, are breeding grounds for local bird species. Our preserves, which on average are about 20 acres in size, may be home to up to 30 different avian species. North Shore Audubon did a survey at our Cushman Woods Preserve over the summer and found 25 bird species, many of which breed there - including the rose-breasted grosbeak, American goldfinch, hairy woodpecker, veery and northern mockingbird.

### How to Create Bird-Friendly Habitats

If you would like to learn more about creating bird-friendly habitats, take a look at these online resources:

***How to Create a Bird Friendly Yard***  
by Rene Ebersole

[www.audubon.org/magazine/july-august-2013/  
how-create-bird-friendly-yard](http://www.audubon.org/magazine/july-august-2013/how-create-bird-friendly-yard)

***Bringing Nature Home*** by Doug Tallamy  
[www.bringingnaturehome.net/gardening-for-life.html](http://www.bringingnaturehome.net/gardening-for-life.html)

**Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology**  
[www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)

Although many species of birds are in decline and some are on the brink of extinction, not all of the news is bad. Studies also show that a number of species have recovered where conservation efforts have taken place and habitats have been restored.

## Critters Love a Messy Garden



Tempting as it might be to “clean up” the garden and your yard for winter, as far as wildlife is concerned, it’s best to leave them as is for the season. “Messy is definitely good to provide food and shelter for birds during the cold winter months,” says Tod Winston, Audubon’s Plants for Birds program manager. Just as we at the Land Alliance try to let native plants grow in our meadows until the end of the winter for the benefit of birds (and other wildlife), leaving flowers and seeds in your home garden (from the growing season just past) will appeal immensely to the inhabitants of your garden. Here are a few tips you can follow through the fall and winter to benefit your garden, lawn and wildlife:

### Leave seeds and galls

Many animals forage on seeds found on wildflowers and native grasses. Seed-eating birds include a number of species that spend the winter on Long Island or stop here during their fall migration, among them blue jays, nuthatches, grosbeaks and sparrows. Studies have

shown a link between availability of winter food sources such as seeds and shriveled fruits and reproductive success.

Goldenrods are examples of plant species on which flies, beetles and wasps lay eggs which are housed in galls (sores or lesions) along the stem. Birds feast on the larvae that result.

### Leave leaves

Saving yourself the activity of raking the lawn will also make the local wildlife happier and healthier than a manicured lawn or garden will. Birds and insects will forage under the leaves which, as they decompose, also fortify the soil. Leaf litter provides shelter for salamanders and toads as well as a place for moth caterpillars on which birds depend. Keep in mind, too, that the chrysalis of a swallowtail or sulfur butterfly as well as countless other beneficial insect species may be overwintering under a leaf on your lawn or in



your garden. If you must rake leaves from your lawn, moving them to your garden beds (rather than bagging them up and delivering them to a landfill!) will benefit the soil there and still provide foraging opportunities for fauna.

### Make a brush pile

Ditto with fallen sticks and limbs. Rather than removing them from your property, use them to make a brush pile that will be very inviting to any number of overwintering bird species (including black-capped chickadees),

rabbits and other wildlife for foraging and shelter.

Avoid the use of chemicals on your lawn and garden. Leaving grass clippings and leaves will do a much better job of nourishing your lawn than chemicals.

And don't forget that fall is a great time to plant the goldenrods, asters, sunflowers, coneflowers and Coreopsis that bestow seeds on your fall and winter garden, as well as countless other native plant species!



## Food and Climate Change Lecture

# FOOD AND CLIMATE: THE WAY FORWARD

A Special Lecture followed by a Panel Discussion

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory's Grace Auditorium  
One Bungtown Road, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724

Thank you to everyone who attended the Food and Climate: The Way Forward lecture and panel discussion at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory on Monday, October 28th co-hosted with Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, North Country Garden Club, The Nature Conservancy, Three Harbors Garden Club and St. John's Church (Cold Spring Harbor). It was a wonderful evening addressing an important topic with 225 people in attendance.

The evening began with the big question, how do we feed 9 billion people in a changing climate without destroying the planet? Agriculture, forestry and other land use is responsible for 25 percent of greenhouse gas emissions annually. Greenhouse gases are contributing to climate change. Climate change affects crop health and production, making it more difficult to produce

food. What are the solutions and approaches to this intricately complex issue?

Dr. Bruce Stillman, President and CEO of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, and Lisa Ott, President and CEO of the Land Alliance, kicked off the evening with an introduction. Katy Kinsolving, food writer, cooking teacher working in climate change education and co-founder of C-Change Conversations provided a general overview of the impacts of climate change to food production and food's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. A panel discussion followed featuring experts Rebecca Benner, New York Director of Conservation and Science at The Nature Conservancy; Peter Lehner, Director of the Sustainable Food and Farming Program at Earthjustice; and Doreen Ware



from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and adjunct professor at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Benner discussed the importance of soil health and how tilling, a longtime farming practice, releases carbon and is detrimental to soil health. Farmers may replenish soil by reducing tilling practices, planting cover crops, rotating different crops through their farming systems and using better manure management strategies like composting. She also addressed water and how too much and too little water impact farming. Ware is an expert on plant genomics and bioinformatics, the science of collecting and analyzing complex biological data such as genetic codes. She explained how changing the genes of plants, such as accelerating breeding cycles, may help with food production. Lehner, who was the final panelist of the evening, discussed the challenges of federal policies and how the country needs more agricultural research – agricultural research is half what it was 20 years ago. He also addressed the inadequacies of the current Farm Bill and said, “We need to stop incentivizing stupid practices,” which got a chuckle out of the crowd.

The takeaway from the evening was that we need to change our approach to food production to help curb climate change and to help sustain the growing population on Earth. We also need to rethink how the decisions we make in our lives today are going to determine what our future will be. Better education results in better choices.

Our panelists have offered the following suggestions for how we can help improve the future of our world.

### Peter Lehner, Earth Justice



**1) Vote and get everyone you know to vote.** Do everything you can to talk to younger people about the importance of voting. Younger people vote at half the rate of those over 55. I've been amazed how many young people who claim to care don't vote. Don't take voting by others for granted.

**2) Talk about the reality of the imminence of climate change** to those friends that we know are dubious or don't care. Don't pick fights with the hard-core deniers, but many of our friends vaguely know and vaguely care but don't incorporate climate change into their thinking. Those are the people we need to talk with.

**3) Walk the talk.** Reduce meat, especially beef and lamb, consumption (yes, unless you are sure it is raised in a regenerative fashion, which is not the same as merely grassfed); reduce discretionary air travel; examine all other aspects of your life and think how they affect the climate. Then talk the walk — advocate for policies that make the changes you are making easier, such as better produce in supermarkets, more plant-based options in restaurants, better and safer bike lanes. The personal and the political work best together.



## Katy Kinsolving, C-Change Conversations



**1) Vote, Vote, Vote, and Call, Call, Call current legislators** — both at the state and federal level — to let them know that this issue is important to you and that you will be looking at their voting record (see League of Conservation Voters for guidelines) when you go to vote. Much work is being done at the state level so check in with your state's renewable energy targets. Research the renewable energy targets of your state, or states where you own property.

**2) Get involved with your local town or community;** is there a climate action plan? A wetland or waterfront commission? Has your town conducted an energy audit? If you live on or near the water, talk to your local leaders about the implications of sea level rise. Check out *The New York Times* article on new calculations for sea level rise by Climate Central. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/10/29/climate/coastal-cities-underwater.html>.

**3) In terms of diet,** yes, reduce your beef intake, but if you do eat beef, make sure that it has been raised using managed or rotational grazing principles. Luckily there are several small cattle farms in New York state that are doing this. In your own kitchen, look at where your food comes from - are you buying blueberries in January that have been flown in from Chile? Maybe

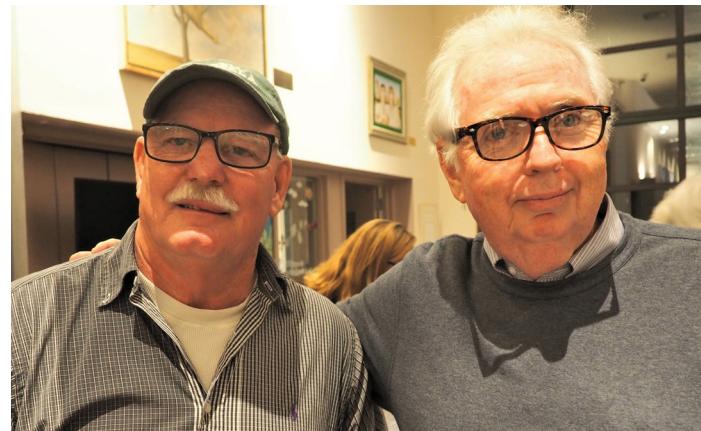
you want to buy a large number of blueberries from your local farmer in August and freeze them, which brings me to appliances.

**4) If you have old appliances upgrade to energy efficient models.** There is a device called a Killawatt that can tell you how much electricity each appliance in your house is using, helping you to pinpoint the energy vampires. In my community the Energy and Environment Commission is donating three of these devices to the local library so that people can check them out and do this research. People who check them out and fill out a small report on the energy vampire in their house will receive a free batch of LED light bulbs.

**5) In your own yard:** eliminate fertilizer, use compost, create a compost bin, plant trees, plant trees, plant trees. Work with your local community to plant trees.

**6) Depending on the state you live in** — and New York happens to be ahead of the curve on this one — **buy an electric car.** Talk to your employer about the new NYS program that encourages companies to install electric car chargers at work so that employees can charge while they work.

**7) Support non-profits that preserve land, wetlands and farmland.** Support non-profits that provide research in ecosystems, soil, botany, oceans and agricultural systems and local, state (especially state!) and national advocacy groups that are trying to change the rules to address climate change.



## Rebecca Benner, The Nature Conservancy



- 1) Commit to zero waste –**  
eat all leftovers or freeze them.  
Make stock from your vegetable  
scraps. Then compost any non-  
edible waste:
- <https://www.grownyc.org/compost/locations>
  - <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/site/services/food-scrap-and-yard-waste-page/nyc-food-scrap-drop-off-locations>

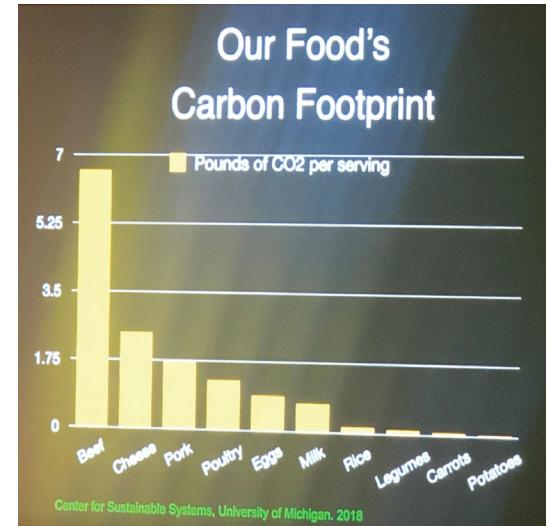
**2) Only buy organic and focus on local items when you shop for groceries**

**3) Buy things in bulk and limit packaging whenever possible with what you buy.**

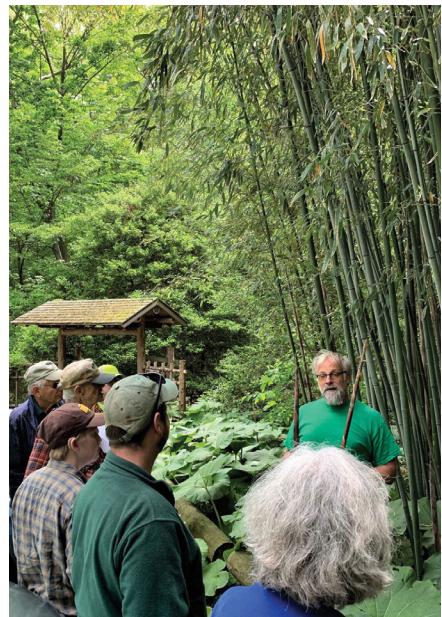
**4) Do not use any plastic bags at the store.**

Use reusable shopping bags and for produce use reusable produce bags: <https://www.amazon.com/Earthwise-Reusable-Mesh-Produce-Bags/dp/B005E2QRPG> (there are many, many kinds)

**Stay engaged, stay involved and do your part to save our planet.**



# 2020 Walks in the Woods Calendar



## Wednesday, January 1, noon

Meghan Leverock, Fox Hollow Preserve, Laurel Hollow – starting the year fresh in our beautiful, diverse woodland

## Saturday, February 29, 10:00 a.m.

Eric Lamont, North Fork Preserve, Northville – old growth forest/natural communities

## Saturday, March 7, 2:00 p.m.

John Turner, Cranberry Bog Preserve, Riverhead – natural and industrial history

## Friday, April 24, 6:00 p.m.

Dave Taft, Hope Goddard Iselin Preserve, Upper Brookville – early spring flowers

## Saturday, May 2, 2:00 p.m.

Peter Martin, Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside – shorebirds/warblers

## Friday, June 5, 11:00 a.m. (World Environment Day)

Virginia Dankel, Christopher Morley Park, Roslyn – More than Morley, nature and inspirational readings

## Friday, July 31, 7:30 p.m.,

Stella Miller, Hope Goddard Iselin Preserve, Upper Brookville - owl and bat prowls

## Saturday, August 15, 10:00 a.m.

Tim Dooley, Youngs Farm, Old Brookville – farm tour

**Saturday, September 19, 10:00 a.m.**

Amanda Furcall, Hempstead Plains, Garden City –  
Nassau County prairie

**Sunday, October 4, noon**

John Potente, Sunken Meadow, Kings Park –  
monarchs and migration

**Saturday, October 24, 2:00 p.m.**

Peter Martin, TOBAY Beach, Massapequa - salt  
marsh/maritime forest/ocean, fall migration insects/  
birds

**Sunday, November 1, 11:00 a.m.**

Greg Kramer, Alley Pond Park –  
layers of the forest in glorious fall

**Saturday, December 5, 2:00 p.m.**

Jane Jackson - Beaver Brook corridor hike that will  
warm you up!

Walks in the Woods are free and open to the general  
public, but you must register online at [www.northshorelandalliance.org/events](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org/events). Walks are also subject to  
change so please check our website for updates.



## Other Cool Things to Do Outside in 2020

**Wednesday, July 15, 6:00 p.m. (Rain date: July 16)**

Kayak Tour with Peter Martin and Don Niddrie at Shore Road, Cold Spring Harbor

**Saturday, Sept 12, 2:00 p.m.**

Kayak Tour with Peter Martin at Bar Beach, North Hempstead

We are also beginning to build our list for 2020 Cool Things to Do Outside. So far, we have two kayak trips scheduled: We would love your suggestions for new and different activities. If you have ideas for activities you and your family might enjoy in 2020, please contact Jane Jackson at 516-922-1028 or [jjackson@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:jjackson@northshorelandalliance.org).

**To register, please visit our website at [www.northshorelandalliance.org/events](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org/events).**

# William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil Conservation Stewards Program Evaluation



*Class of 2019*

After you launch a multi-year program, it's important to stop and evaluate outcomes (both qualitative and quantitative) periodically. As we wrap up our fourth year of the William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil Conservation Stewards Program and prepare for next year, we thought it important to reach out to some of our past interns. We particularly wanted to ask them to reflect on the value of their time spent with the Land Alliance.

Quantitatively, there have been 15 O'Neil Conservation Stewards since the program began in 2015. Together they have contributed 5,600 volunteer hours to Land Alliance initiatives. All of them have been integral to the Land Alliance's ability to manage nearly 600 acres of local lands.

But the real impact of the intern program has been qualitative in nature, as evidenced by the following responses:

## **Abby Bezrutczyk Conservation Steward Summer 2018**

College classes often give the facts and leave application to the imagination, whereas a great internship can provide skills and experience to put that knowledge into context. My internship with North Shore Land Alliance did this and more, as it helped me develop ideas of conservation and stewardship that I will carry with me into the future.



*Class of 2018*



## Emily Manning Conservation Steward Summer 2018

My summer in the Joyce and William O'Neil Stewards Program was a great opportunity that gave me strong experience and knowledge concerning environmental and land conservation. During this time, I was able to assist in multiple conservation and habitat restoration projects that taught me how to correctly identify and deal with multiple different species of plants. I also gained strong experience in the monitoring and removal of invasive plants and learned the process and importance of conservation easements. Along with this, I really enjoyed creating and leading volunteer events for all ages. Engaging with the community taught me the importance of educating others about environmental conservation and the nature preserves they are surrounded by. My favorite part about this internship was how hands-on it was. Every day, we were out in one of the North Shore Land Alliance's beautiful nature preserves doing work. This ranged from trail maintenance, species removal or plant identification to leading a nature walk. This internship introduced me to working with GIS, a framework for gathering, managing and analyzing data. The other interns and I were able to create multiple databases and maps that represented the different plant species growing in Humes field and the many ash trees located on all of the nature preserves. This inspired me to gain more knowledge in GIS and I am currently a Geospatial Technician at Continental Mapping. I am hoping to use my skills learned here and transfer them to eventually work for an environmental consulting firm that works to preserve our natural resources using GIS. Overall, this program is a great and enriching opportunity that I would highly recommend to anyone interested in land conservation and stewardship!

## Jeanne Wu Conservation Steward Summer and Fall 2019

Before my position with NSLA, I always wondered who maintained conservation lands and their trails, but now I realize how ignorant and simple my curiosity

While exploring the preserves and maintaining trails, I learned skills that apply to the environmental side of things: making maps with advanced software, identifying plants and creating a monitoring program for ash trees. However, I learned that conservation is not solely concerned with nature; people are a vital component. We led educational walks, designed and installed an interpretive trail and led children's programs, all to keep people in the equation.

Before this internship, I would have told you that Long Island was mostly highway— but this internship changed my perspective. I learned that there are indeed some beautiful, diverse and historic natural areas here that feel like discoveries. But I also learned that the land does not have to be pristine and untouched to be valuable. It is the people who come together to hike, to learn about the environment and to steward the land, that give the land value.

I currently do research on invasive plants but want to pursue jobs in restoring natural areas on Long Island. I want to continue the work I started as a stewardship intern: to notice, protect, and enhance the land for the benefit of all.

was. NSLA is a nonprofit land trust, where most of their preserves are donated, and many times, the state of these land parcels is overgrown with invasive plant species. A staple of my duty is to identify these invasive species and to properly remove them to prevent further spread, a duty not as simple as it seems. Fast reproduction, fast growth, high fecundity, and durability are main traits that allow the success of these invasive plants. Therefore, removing the entire plant is essential, including roots, fruits, and seeds. This allows for a healthier preserve with suitable habitats for both native flora and fauna as well as a better hiking experience for people. Often, people ask me why I want to work in an outdoor, insect infested, physical job when I can easily find a better paying, less physical, office job. This is because my work with NSLA is a labor of love. I truly believe my job here with NSLA is making a difference in our environment and community, and that the skills I've obtained from NSLA will help me in my next career journey.

### **Julia Damiano Conservation Steward Summer 2019**

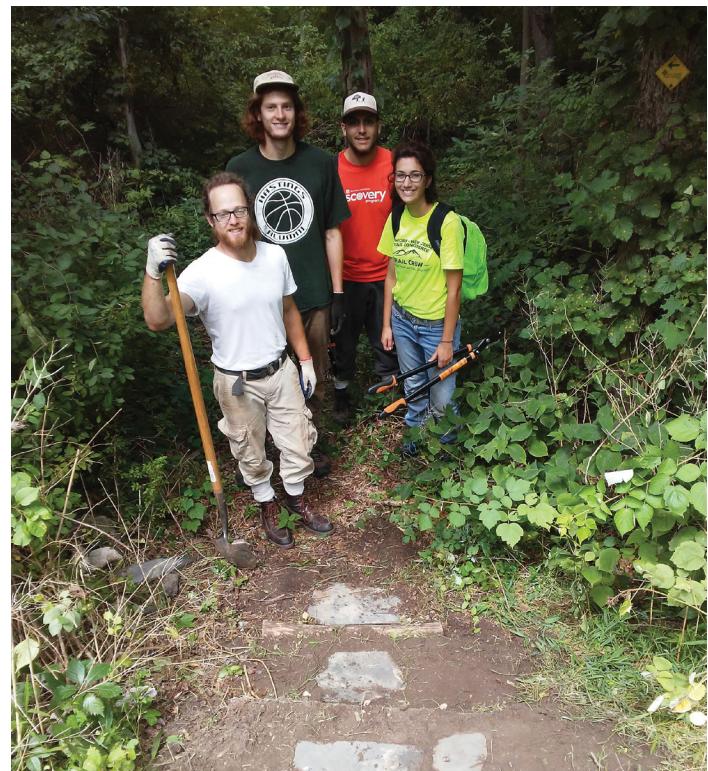
Throughout the summer internship with the North Shore Land Alliance, I was able to further my knowledge in land management and conservation! As a recent graduate from the University of Delaware, where I studied Natural Resources and Wildlife Ecology, I had a solid understanding of the needs of the land and species diversity. My experience with NSLA, however, allowed me to take what I learned during my undergraduate career and pushed me to apply it in a setting that deepened my knowledge and truly tested my skills. Not only did I find my species identification skills improve dramatically throughout the months, but I also was able to discover the needs of the land in a woodland setting and be a better advocate for the proper care of our natural spaces. The work that I did with NSLA helped prepare me for my current position as the Land Stewardship Coordinator with the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and gave me a unique



*Class of 2017*

perspective to share with my peers during my graduate career at Northeastern University. Overall, being an O'Neil Steward was the best internship opportunity that I've had to date. The support from the NSLA staff (especially Meghan and Jane) allowed me to delve into my passion and make an impact around Long Island!

Our original aim for the O'Neil Stewards Program was to give college students a diverse experience, build their job skills and inspire them to consider careers in conservation. So far, so good!



*Class of 2017*

## A Season of News at the Roosevelt Community Garden



Building on last year's success, we welcomed 16 new garden members, organized three new activities for adults and children, added new picnic tables and signage and planted new varieties of crops. In late August, garden members, old and new, hosted a potluck supper which featured a special workshop, *Food and Mental Health*. The workshop was led by yoga instructor and health coach April Diane and included a cooking demonstration featuring chef Dimas Rodriguez and garden manager Keno Williams. Artists Jill DeGroff (see volunteer spotlight pg. 29) and Caryn Allen worked with local children to paint a mural transforming two nondescript toolsheds into vibrant and welcoming spaces.

To the surprise of many, cotton also grew at the Roosevelt Community Garden this summer. Thanks to the efforts of Gardener Gloria Cassell with seeds from her family's garden in Illinois, she created a cotton exhibit, of sorts, to educate more people about cotton and its link to "Black Migration". Ms. Cassell was available on Saturday mornings from 10:00 am until

noon to meet with anyone who wanted to see the fluffy fiber grow and learn more about its cultivation and cultural significance.

Over the winter, our goal is to register gardeners for the upcoming season, which will officially begin in March 2020 and run until late November, and partner with local organizations to host additional workshops so gardeners can be prepared for the upcoming season. Next year, one section of the garden will be designated for more community growing. Community members will have an opportunity to purchase pre-picked produce without renting a plot for the season. All donations will be used to maintain the garden and purchase additional supplies.

Special thanks to Land Alliance volunteers and staff and the O'Neil Conservation Stewards for lending a hand this summer. If you're interested in becoming a garden member or volunteering at the Garden, please contact Andrea Millwood at 516-922-1028 or [andrea@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:andrea@northshorelandalliance.org).

# Volunteers for Open Space



## Invasive Species Awareness Week:

Walk & Weed: In conjunction with New York State Invasive Species Awareness Week, volunteers removed ten garbage bags full of the invasive *Artemisia vulgaris*, also known as common mugwort from the meadow at Hope Goddard Iselin Preserve. They also followed the Preserve's interpretive trail and learned how to identify different invasive species found within the site.

## Roosevelt Community Garden Project:

In August, volunteers ventured out on an extremely hot day to help stain the perimeter fence at the Roosevelt Community Garden then helped with garden maintenance.



## Nixon Peabody Volunteer Day:

In celebration of International Coastal Clean Up Day, Nixon Peabody LLP came to Shore Road Sanctuary in Cold Spring Harbor to assist the Land Alliance stewardship team with a beach cleanup and cutting invasive Phragmites in the wet meadow. They collected six bags of trash from our shoreline that included plastic, glass, Styrofoam, metal pipes, rope and wooden fence posts. The trash was recorded and sent to a national database that tracks oceanic pollution. Many thanks to Nixon Peabody for their hard work and for choosing the Land Alliance for their day of service.





### National Public Lands Day:

On September 28th volunteers gathered at the Humes Preserve to help remove wine-berry and silvergrass from the “overgrown” area around the Poly House. This was no easy task and took a variety of methods including weed-wacking, lopping, pruning and pulling by hand.



### Girl Scout Troop #1805:

Girl Scout Troop #1805 participated in a meadow cleanup at the Humes property. In addition to removing porcelain-berry from the trees, they collected an array of unusual items from the field including chicken wire, cans, bottles, tires, carpet, tennis ball, and even a car taillight! Thank you, Troop #1805, for all your great work!

For more information about the North Shore Land Alliance Volunteers for Open Space program, please contact the Land Alliance at 516-922-1028 or email us at [info@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:info@northshorelandalliance.org).

The Land Alliance would like to thank the many active volunteers who contribute their time and energy to help us accomplish our conservation mission. In each issue of *Conservation News*, we highlight the special efforts of volunteers who have gone that extra mile.

## Volunteer Spotlight



Jill DeGroff started volunteering with the Land Alliance at the Roosevelt Community Garden in 2018. She began working with Keno Williams, the onsite manager, conducting weekly garden maintenance and distributing food in the evenings for the community food share. This season, Jill could be found at the garden on weekend mornings, before the summer heat kicked in, prepping the sheds for a mural painting. In collaboration with Caryn Allen, another mural volunteer, Jill worked with elementary school students to design and paint beautiful murals of flowers and butterflies on the garden sheds. Jill is a professional graphic designer with Dale DeGroff Co. Inc. and a published author. Her work is currently on view at Stage Left in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Many thanks to Jill for sharing her time and talent to bring such life to the Roosevelt Community Garden.



Karina Smith volunteered with the Land Alliance full-time this past summer to learn about non-profit management. Karina was essential in contacting vendors and donors for the 2019 Wine Auction as well as assisting with database management. Karina also participated in community outreach for the North Shore Land Alliance via tabling events at Stop & Shop in Oyster Bay to encourage the community to buy reusable bags through the Stop & Shop Community Bag program that honored the North Shore Land Alliance for the month of July. Currently a sophomore at Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, Karina is a double major in English and Russian. We would like to thank Karina for her help and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

## Five Years In: Long Island Water Education Program

### A Reflection by Our Educator Karen Mossey



Life can take us on so many unexpected journeys leading us to places we never knew existed. I often wonder how I was so fortunate that life led me to North Shore Land Alliance and a career I truly love. In August 2014, the Land Alliance was eager to launch its Long Island Water Education Program (LIWEP) in Long Island schools. I had recently resigned from my tenure position as an elementary school teacher in the Massapequa School District. Teaching about the environment would give me the opportunity to go back to my roots of environmental education. So when I was offered the position I happily accepted.

Teaching the LIWEP is an opportunity to open a dialogue within our communities regarding the importance of water and the value of open space. Many students begin the program unaware that aquifers are our only source of drinking water. They wonder at the notion that they drink water that was once in the ground and are in awe that it was once precipitation. This awareness is the beginning of the educational process that starts in the classroom and continues at home as a conversation.

Since its launch in September 2014, the LIWEP has made its mark on our local schools. Each week students are actively engaged in learning about Long Island's water resources. While the program has always included both classroom and outdoor lessons, its content has been fine-tuned over the years to align with New York State standards and connect with the Math, Science and Social Studies curriculum. The expansion includes STEM events, summer camp programs, homeschooling programming and Girl Scout activities.

The program consists of two classroom sessions and an optional field trip. Session One helps students understand that water is a resource that needs to be used wisely. They learn how much of our planet's water is salt and fresh and how much is available for human use. The students carefully construct a model aquifer to better conceive what is happening below our feet. In Session Two, the focus is on precipitation and the role undeveloped land plays in replenishing their drinking water supply. A recent student comment revealed that students are getting the message: "I am going to let my family know protecting our land protects our drinking

water." Many schools opt for a third session which is a field trip to a local park or preserve. Most schools choose the Land Alliance's Shore Road Sanctuary in Cold Spring Harbor as a field trip location. Students there can be seen travelling through stations learning seashore ecology, grassland ecology and the importance of pollinators. Our Shore Road field trip (which always includes a guest educator from The WaterFront Center, the Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery or the Center for Environmental Education and Discovery) has truly evolved, leading one Hicksville teacher to proclaim that in her 35 years of teaching, her class's LIWEP excursion to Shore Road last spring was far and away the best field trip they've ever attended.

From its first semester in three Oyster Bay area schools,

the program has expanded its reach dramatically. It has been delivered to 24 schools in 14 districts across Long Island and reached over 6,500 students. This impact would not have been possible without dedicated funding from ScottsMiracle-Gro, the MerriLyn Foundation, the Rauch Foundation and the Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation. Their generosity allows so many to understand the value of our water and the critical role conserving land plays in protecting it. The success of this program is to be shared with many. It is important to acknowledge the Land Alliance's role in understanding the power of knowledge. It is vital to educate our children; to do so empowers them to make informed decisions. These decisions will shape our future.



## Long Island Water Education Program Receives ScottsMiracle-Gro Funding for Three More Years

The Land Alliance is delighted to announce that we have received an additional \$75,000 from the Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation to be applied to the Long Island Water Education Program over three years, beginning with the current 2019/20 school year. While many of our school partners now pay for the program, this generous grant will allow us to continue delivering it to schools that cannot afford to. ScottsMiracle-Gro funding enables expansion in both program content and the number and breadth of school partners we reach. In 2019, for example, we were able to cover the cost of buses to our field trip location for title one schools and adapt the program for both home-schooled kids and North Shore Holiday House, a non-profit camp program that provides free summer activity in Huntington for Long Island youngsters. Because we are continuously adding new school partners, this three-year grant enables us to plan ahead for the number of schools for which we are able to provide the program. Thank you, ScottsMiracle-Gro!

## Not All News is Good News



Suspected arson, vandalism, underage drinking, drug use and dumping have all occurred at Land Alliance preserves this summer. In fact, on September 20th a suspicious fire occurred at Wawapek Preserve near the home of Land Alliance staff. The fire lasted for less than an hour, but where the old workshop once stood is now a pile of ash on the remnants of the building's foundation. The fire is believed to have started around 2pm under suspicious conditions. The Suffolk Police Arson Unit is investigating. Thankfully, the fire did not spread, and no one was harmed.

The fire has not been the only problem at Wawapek. Over the last year there's been an escalation in underage drinking, marijuana use and littering at the preserve. And, in some instances, when offenders have been asked to leave or correct their behavior, they have become combative with Land Alliance staff. As you can imagine, the neighbors who use the preserve in an appropriate manner have started to complain too.

We want all of our neighbors and community members to be able to enjoy our beautiful preserves and feel safe while doing so. Wawapek should be a place where community members can experience nature without

fear of being exposed to inappropriate and/or illegal activity. We ask that if you see inappropriate or illegal activity, you please report it to the police.

We are thankful to the Suffolk County Police Department, Cold Spring Harbor Volunteer Fire Department and Huntington Fire Department for their quick response in helping us with the fire.

Instances of dumping on a number of Land Alliance preserves has also increased. If you see something, please do give us a call at 516-922-1028.



## Fido in Nature



*The dogs of North Shore Land Alliance*

We love dogs! And we love that they encourage us to get outdoors. That's why we allow dogs at most of our nature preserves. But we have a few simple rules in place to keep other visitors (both two-legged and four-legged) and wildlife safe and happy.

Keep dogs on leashes! Here are some important reasons to keep your pup leashed while exploring our trails:

- **Safety:** Ticks are abundant throughout many of our preserves. If your dog wanders off the trail, he could be exposed to Lyme disease.
- **Other Visitors:** While we love dogs, other people and other dogs may not appreciate an enthusiastic greeting from a stranger. Our preserves are meant to be enjoyed by all.
- **Wildlife:** Though it may seem harmless to let your dog run free and play in the woods, fields and wetlands, try looking at it from a cardinal's point of view. An unleashed dog can disturb feeding, mating, nesting and rearing young—not just for cardinals but for many other wildlife species as well. Plants can suffer as well.

When in nature, it is important to remember the Boy Scouts of America pledge, "Leave no trace". Please pack a pick-up bag, clean up after your dog and take the bagged waste with you. In addition to being unattractive to step on, pet waste increases nitrogen in the soil, encouraging growth of invasive plants and making it harder for many native plants to survive.

## Open Space Society Dinner at the Historic Applewood



On Saturday, June 29th, Martha and Gar Miller graciously hosted the Land Alliance's annual Open Space Society dinner at their beautiful historic home - Applewood - located in the Village of Upper Brookville. The evening included cocktails and dinner overlooking the expansive fields that were once part of the former 125-acre equestrian estate of Montague and Thyrza Flagg.

Guests were treated to a special talk by Gar Miller about the history of the house, its architecture and the surrounding land. Applewood was designed in 1914 by Montague Flagg Jr. as a country residence for Flagg and his wife Thyrza Benson. Flagg, a nephew of noted Beaux-Arts architect Ernest Flagg, was best known for designing the Astor Trust Building, later named the Bankers Trust Building, in New York City. Montague Flagg also designed Peapacton, the Rutherford S. Pierrepont country estate in Bedminster, New Jersey, and Hamilton Farm, the James Cox Brady equestrian estate in Somerset Hills, New Jersey.

Historian and author Paul Mateynas briefly discussed the history of the area. He noted that Applewood is an example of one of the few country estates on the north shore that is still intact and with a beautiful scenic view shed. He added that due to the efforts of community members and organizations like the North Shore Land Alliance, we are fortunate that many of the local cultural and natural resources have been preserved and, with that, the history and character of the community.

Since 2007, the Land Alliance has been fortunate to have been invited to host our Open Space Society dinners at some of the most beautiful and historic private residences on the north shore of Long Island. We have experienced their extraordinary beauty and learned about their unique histories. Proceeds from these special evenings have been used to support our local land conservation efforts.

We thank Martha and Gar Miller for graciously hosting a truly exceptional Open Space Dinner and all those who supported and attended the event.

### Thank you to our Generous Sponsors

Lori and Roger Bahnik, the Bahnik Foundation, Cathy Chernoff, Susan and Jack Foley  
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## Summer Soiree at the NoMad Hotel



On Wednesday, June 19th, nearly 60 people ventured out on a rainy summer evening to attend our Heritage Committee Summer Soiree held at the NoMad Hotel's elegant indoor rooftop.

The Heritage Committee of the Land Alliance is viewed by the committee's founders as the "next generation." This group is made up of people in their 20s and 30s who care about land conservation and have a connection to the north shore of Long Island.

Silent auction highlights included a four-night stay at Casa de Campo Resort in the Dominican Republic and a stunning marsh landscape oil painting by Diana Beard.

Thank you to our event co-chairs, committee members and generous sponsors - Ooh la Shoppe, the Hawthorne Gardening Company and real estate professional Gabriella Schaefer - for helping make the event a success.



## Calling All Party Animals



This year's 16th Annual Wine Auction & Dinner, titled "Into the Wild", took place on Saturday, October 5th at Groton Farm, the 108-acre preserved estate owned by Land Alliance trustees Julie and Luis Rinaldini. The theme was a play on the wild, open space of Long Island's north shore, which was presented throughout the event in the form of vases and urns overflowing with fall wildflowers, native grasses and greenery, wooden stumps holding candles, pumpkins and mini bronze figures of woodland animals.

The sold-out crowd of over 400 guests entered through the barn at the foot of the property and were welcomed by waiters holding trays of Tequila Mule and Maple Leaf cocktails. Guests mingled through the wine

auction room, which offered over 70 lots of unique and specialty wines, as well as tastings from six boutique wineries from the North Fork of Long Island. Guests were also actively bidding on the more than 80 silent auction lots, including items such as a private Hinckley Yacht experience, a vacation home in Stratton, VT, a live taping and VIP tour of the Today Show's Studio 1A, a two-night stay at The Surf Lodge in Montauk, a dinner party for 12 with chef Mar Slocum, a night out in New York City at the Gramercy Park Hotel with dinner at the exclusive Lobster Club, a MIRROR Gym, a tennis outing and barbecue for 12 on the grass courts of Piping Rock Club, concert tickets, sports tickets, beautiful jewelry, artwork and much more.

As guests dined on delicious food catered by Sterling Affair, Co-Chairs Jenna Bush Hager and Kate Doerge introduced the evening's Auctioneer, Hugh Hildesley of Sotheby's. Mr. Hildesley engaged the crowd, which was excitedly bidding on experiences including a once in a lifetime trip to Napa Valley, CA, a five-day stay in Deer Valley, UT for up to 13 guests, the ultimate golf package with unaccompanied rounds at National, Friar's Head and Fisher's Island, a vacation to the Six Senses resort in Thailand, a group skate with six current and former Islanders members, a trip to Palm Beach, a Sterling Affair catered dinner for 16 under the stars at Wawapek Preserve, a trip to Costa Rica, a trip to the Dominican Republic, two exceptional cases of Pavillon Rouge and a Napa Valley Wine Barrel Program (which offers bidders the opportunity to create their own personalized labels for each case purchased).

The live portion was concluded with a special appeal in honor of Land Alliance Founding Board Chair, Carter Bales. It focused on the creation of the Carter and Suzy Bales Quiet Meadow - a beautiful, serene and environmentally significant habitat that is being seeded this fall at the Humes property (opening to the public in spring 2020).

After dinner, the party moved to the barn loft, decorated with hay bale sofas covered in throw blankets, where guests filled the space and danced late into the night under the star lighting to an incredible DJ. It was a very exciting and successful night for the North Shore Land Alliance, with many new faces joining loyal longtime supporters creating a new energy we're excited to carry on year after year.

A very special thank you to our Lead Sponsors, Douglas Elliman, Botsy and Hoyle Jones, Claudia and Gunnar Overstrom, Joe and Clare LoCicero on behalf of Volunteers for Wildlife and all of our incredibly generous Donors, Underwriters and Friends. Lastly, a heartfelt thank you to our Event Committee and Wine Auction Chairs Allison and Jay Aston, Kate and Chad Doerge, Jenna Bush Hager and Henry Hager, Amory and Sean McAndrew, Claudia and Gunnar Overstrom, Veronica and Jamie Beard, Helene and Stuyvesant Comfort, Paula and Christoph Cushman, Wandy and William Hoh, Shauna and Nicholas Leopardi, Emily and Scott McLellan, Kingsley and Caleigh Toye and Hanna and Taylor Robinson.



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## Welcome our New Office Manager



Jennifer Simone joined the North Shore Land Alliance in August and got her feet wet immediately, assisting in the coordination of the Land Alliance's 16th Annual Wine Auction and Dinner for 400+ people.

She brings more than 20 years of successful administrative and operational experience, most recently managing the day-to-day operations of a fast-paced international luxury custom furniture business. Prior to that, Jen worked for 13 years as an office manager for a local land surveying and civil engineering firm, where she assisted key executives with everything from client relations to project management. Throughout her career, Jennifer has been known as the go-to person, doing whatever it takes to get the job done.

On weekends, she can be found at the beach or at her home in Bayville, where she was born and raised and lives with her husband, Patrick, and sweet bulldog puppy, Luna.

The Land Alliance Board and Staff are delighted to welcome Jennifer to the Land Alliance family.

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The North Shore Land Alliance is a nationally accredited, 501(c) (3) non-profit land trust formed to protect and preserve, in perpetuity, the green spaces, farmlands, wetlands, groundwater and historical sites of Long Island's north shore for the enhancement of quality of life and benefit of future generations.



SEASONS GREETINGS AND  
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## SAVE THE DATES!

**Wednesday, May 20, 2020**  
Annual Golf and Tennis Outing  
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**Saturday, October 3, 2020**  
Annual Wine Auction & Dinner  
Location to be announced

## GIFT MEMBERSHIP



Purchase a Land Alliance membership for a friend.  
[www.northshorelandalliance.org/gift-membership](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org/gift-membership)



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