



WESTERN NEW YORK
LAND CONSERVANCY

The Resource

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN NEW YORK LAND CONSERVANCY

FALL 2018

We Need You to Protect the College Lodge Forest

Is Conservation right for you?

Close your eyes and think about your favorite place outdoors. What do you see? Is it a lush green forest? A colorful windswept meadow? Is it the golden sunset shining across your family's farm fields? Perhaps it's the place where you go for a jog or the trail where you ride your bike.

At the Land Conservancy, we protect places like these where Western New Yorkers of all ages reconnect with nature, today and forever. If you would like to join us and protect our region's special places, we welcome you to begin or renew your membership today.

Simply make a donation online at wnylc.org or return the enclosed envelope with your donation. You can also choose to be a monthly giver and support conservation all year through a simple, automatic monthly donation. Your tax-deductible contribution today will become tomorrow's protected places.

You can also make a difference by lending a hand in the office or on the land. If you're interested in becoming a volunteer, let Alicia know with a call at (716) 687-1225 or send her an email at aliciaf@wnylc.org.



Designing the DL&W

This fall we are kicking off a design ideas competition for the DL&W rail corridor in Buffalo to help reimagine the future of this corridor as an inspiring multi-use urban nature trail and linear park. A jury of community leaders and designers, as well as the community itself, will help select our favorite ideas. We expect submissions from all over the world so stay tuned for your chance to see these ideas for yourself at an open house in 2019...



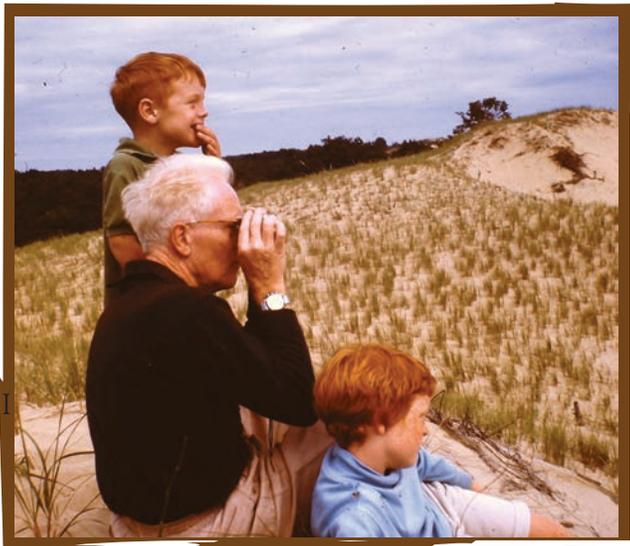
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Welcome to The Valley

Right in the heart of The Valley neighborhood of Buffalo, the Land Conservancy has opened a second office at 169 Elk Street. Part of the former St. Clare Church has been completely renovated into a stunning multi-use building with office space that is the new home base for our Conservation Department.



Our urban office will shorten our staff members' commutes, shrinking our ecological footprint. Some staff have already started riding their bikes to work! The Elk Street office will also be more centrally located to many of our preserves and protected lands throughout the region. It will bring us even closer to the DL&W rail corridor where we hope to create a trail and park. We are excited to be closer to our partners downtown and closer to you!



© Gayle Hutton

My Conservation Legacy: It all began with Tootsie Rolls...

One of my earliest memories is hiking the Canadian Rockies with my mom and dad when I was only three years old, eating Tootsie Rolls along the way.

I was lucky to grow up in a family of adventurers who, to this day, love and appreciate the outdoors. Every summer my family visited my grandparents' cottage on Crystal Lake in Michigan. The moments we spent together hiking the Point Betsie dunes between our house and Lake Michigan are some of my most treasured to this day. Now in their 80's, my folks still hike the dunes and walk the beach.

The dunes are now protected by a local land trust, just like the Land Conservancy, and because of that, I know that kids today and future generations of kids will have the chance to grow up making memories like mine.

I am delighted to leave a legacy of conservation by supporting the Western New York Land Conservancy through my Planned Giving. My love for the natural world that started when I was just a little girl will live on long after I am gone.

Talk to your financial or tax advisor to find out how you can give. It's the responsible thing to do for you and for your family. You know how important the work is, and this is a great way to show it.

- **Gayle Hutton**, Legacy Society Member

What will your **legacy** be?

Legacy giving to the Land Conservancy is making a gift so future generations will be able to enjoy the lands and character of Western New York that we all cherish today.

There are lots of ways to include the Land Conservancy both during retirement and in your estate plans, including bequests, gifts of retirement plans, IRAs, life insurance policies, and gifts of real estate or land.

We would like to **thank** those who have already included the Land Conservancy in their **estate planning**.

LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS:

James Battaglia
Larry and Sheila Drake
Joan M. and Edward G. Eschner
Deborah H. Fenn
Amy Holt
Ed and Gayle Hutton
Paul and Jane Lehman
Barbara Mierzwa
Nancy and Tom Smith
Dorothy Westhafer
Clarence Wigler

To learn more, contact our Executive Director, Nancy Smith at (716) 687-1225.



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The College Lodge Forest



© Abby Sornigin



© Priscilla Titus



© Priscilla Titus



© Priscilla Titus

Budding conservationists need your help to save this old growth forest

Nearly a century ago during the Great Depression, a group of students purchased a forest near SUNY Fredonia so they would have a place to spend time in nature. The College Lodge Forest sits high on a ridge overlooking the Lake Erie plain in Chautauqua County. When it rains here, some of the rain water flows into the Atlantic Ocean, and some flows towards the Gulf of Mexico. Many rare plants and animals make their homes amongst the old growth trees and throughout the pristine forest.

The first time that Priscilla and Jon Titus wandered the College Lodge Forest trails, named for conservation icons like Muir, Leopold, and Darwin, they marveled at the remarkable plant life. It is not easy to impress Priscilla, our on-staff ecologist, or her husband Jon, a biology professor at SUNY Fredonia. They are world travelers that have researched plant life all across the US, Costa Rica, the Bahamas, Europe, India, and Africa.

Jon eagerly awaits the start of each fall semester when he gets to take all the freshman biology majors to the College Lodge Forest for an introduction to the ecology of the region. Like the professors before him, Jon inspires the next generation of conservation leaders. His students have gone on to become scientists, authors, educators, and nature enthusiasts. In fact, one of his former students is our Communications and Development Associate, Alicia Fahrner.

Unfortunately, the College Lodge Forest has an uncertain future. A few years ago logging was considered to raise money to maintain the historic buildings on the grounds. But the Faculty Student Association who owns the land, wants a different future for the forest: a forever protected showcase of our region's natural heritage. Jon and Priscilla, the students, and the community agree that saving the forest is the right thing to do.

"We have lost nearly all of New York's original forests," said Jon sadly. "Old growth forests are complex and irreplaceable: when you lose a 200-year-old hemlock, an entire ecosystem of old growth dependent plants, animals, and microorganisms is disrupted. When trees are cut, the forest network is damaged and the impact reaches far and wide."

Without the forest, future generations will never know the feeling of wonder as they walk through the ancient woods. Old growth forests clean our water and our air. The loss of the College Lodge Forest would affect everyone, including you.

Right now we are working with the State of New York at Fredonia Faculty Student Association (FSA) to purchase the forest around the lodge. FSA will continue to own and operate the lodge and the 33 acres around it. We must raise \$730,000 by the spring of 2020 to purchase the 168-acre forest.

If we are successful, the College Lodge Forest will remain a publicly accessible nature preserve where students, families, and Western New Yorkers of all ages can continue to connect with nature, just as the forest's founders intended a century ago.

Would you like to join the Guardians of the College Lodge Forest?

Please consider making a donation on our website, www.wnylc.org, or send a check to P.O. Box 471, East Aurora, NY 14052. Feel free to call us at (716) 687-1225 if you have any thoughts or questions.



Lessons from the Land:

Where does your clean drinking water come from?

As Western New Yorkers, we are protectors of the Great Lakes. Did you know that the Great Lakes contain 84% of North America's surface freshwater? That's 21% of the available surface freshwater on the planet! That means that more than one-fifth of the world's freshwater flows through Western New York.

In the same way that each screaming fan makes the whole Ralph Wilson Stadium roar on a Sunday in Buffalo, each of our streams and creeks are the headwaters that become the Great Lakes, the largest freshwater basin in the world. Unfortunately, we have not always been careful stewards of the land around the Great Lakes, and now the region needs us to protect water quality and our important forest habitats while we still can.

Forests are key to protecting water quality. The roots of trees and understory plants in these forests prevent soil erosion and reduce water pollution by trapping chemicals for bacteria to decompose. Tree canopies shade and cool the water to prevent algae growth from covering the water's surface. This clean, cool, clear water provides habitat for Western New York's aquatic plants and creatures. As summer fades, falling leaves provide the foundation of aquatic food webs as they are eaten by stonefly, mayfly, and caddisfly larvae. These larvae then become food for predator insects, crayfish, and fish in the stream.

In addition to helping maintain aquatic ecosystems, forests also provide important habitat for wildlife. A healthy stream, free of pollution and sediments, will support millions of insects that provide important spring food sources for bats and birds raising their young. Crayfish and fish are a food source for many animals, such as raccoons, martens, fishers, and minks. A clean stream also provides a water source for many species, including humans. The meandering paths of streams across our landscape also provide a corridor for wildlife, where they can take refuge from human threats.

Over the last two centuries, we cleared much of our forest for cities and industry, which has damaged water quality and wildlife habitat in Western New York. At one time, forests surrounded nearly all creeks, rivers, and lakes throughout the northeast. Today, few large areas of forest remain. Intact old-growth forests near waterways are especially rare.

Fortunately, a mature forest exists right next to our office in Wales, and we have the opportunity to protect this beautiful place right now. We need the community's help to protect the 222-acre Mossy Point Forest. Mossy Point will fill in the missing piece between our Kenneglenn Preserve and Hunters Creek County Park to create an enormous 1,100 acres of protected land and secure headwaters of the Great Lakes. Once protected, new trails will make Mossy Point a publicly accessible nature preserve.

We only have until December 2019 to raise \$1.6 million to protect Mossy Point. We welcome each of our members to become protectors of our Great Lakes waters by supporting this project. For more information, please call us at (716) 687-1225 or email info@wnylc.org.



Focus on farmland

Thirty-one million acres. That is how much farmland the U.S. lost between 1992 and 2012, according to a new report, *Farms Under Threat*, by our partners at American Farmland Trust.

Just how big is 31 million acres? It's about the same size as New York State! Can you imagine how much food farmers could produce on that much land? We have to act today to make sure we have food to eat tomorrow.

There is good news! Thanks to your support, and funding from the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets, this year we protected a third-generation family dairy, Triple Oak Farms in Eden. We will protect the D&J Brawdy vegetable farm in Eden before the year's end, and this summer we applied for two more grants to protect even more farmland in Western New York.

Are you a farmer? Let us know if you want more information on protecting your land by giving us a call today at (716) 687-1225.



*Elliot Everett Hill, third generation on Grandpa Vilonen's Land Conservancy-protected farm.
©Courtney Sanville*

Thank you

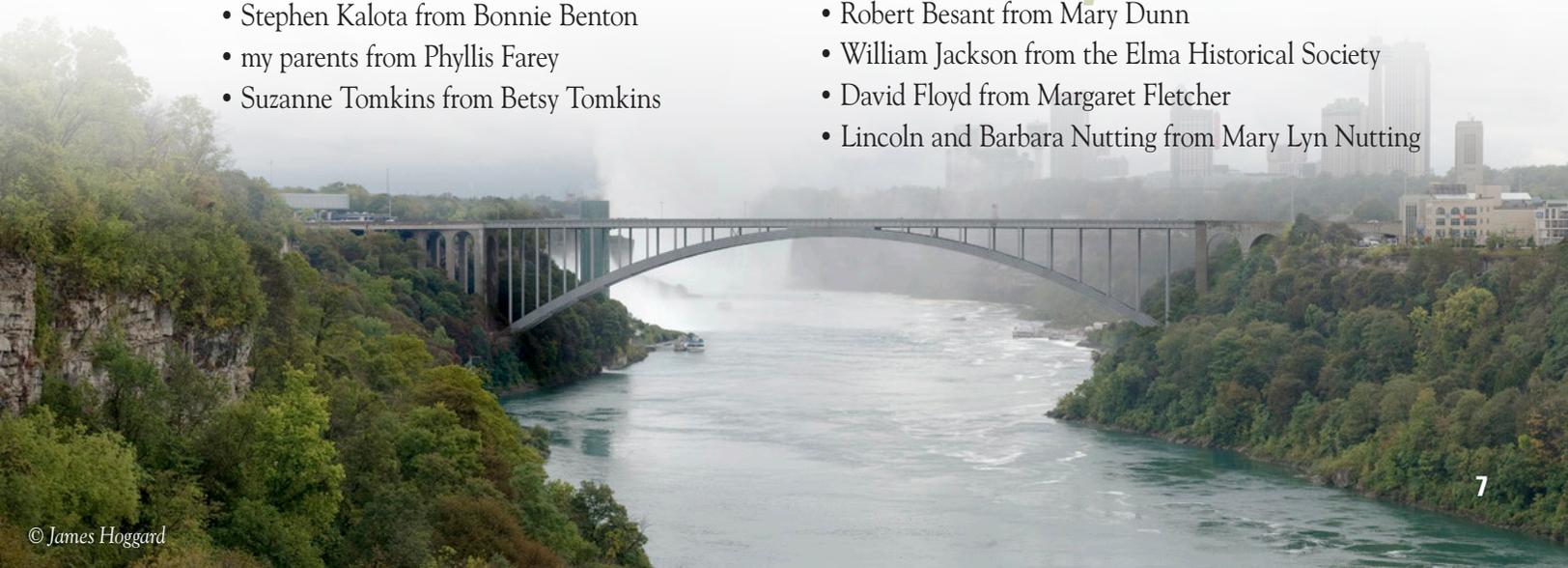
for honoring those you care for
and supporting their love for nature.

In honor of

- Stephen Kalota from Bonnie Benton
- my parents from Phyllis Farey
- Suzanne Tomkins from Betsy Tomkins

In memory of

- Robert Besant from Mary Dunn
- William Jackson from the Elma Historical Society
- David Floyd from Margaret Fletcher
- Lincoln and Barbara Nutting from Mary Lyn Nutting



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The Western New York Land Conservancy is a not-for-profit land trust that permanently protects natural and agricultural lands in Western New York. The Land Conservancy is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and is one of 1000+ land trusts nationwide, including 90 in New York State. Together, we protect more than 56 million acres, and you can help us preserve even more...

Let's go for a walk...

Winter Tree Walk

Saturday, January 26, 2019 | 12 to 2 pm

Western New York is beautiful all year round, so bundle up and join us! We will learn how to identify our region's trees in the winter while we stroll along the snowy paths of the Niagara Escarpment Preserve in Lockport. This unique walk will be led by guest guide and tree expert, Erik Danielsen.

To sign up for this event or for information about our other events, please visit wnylc.org/events or call us at (716) 687-1225



Creature Feature

Northern long-eared bats (*Myotis septenionalis*) are distinguished by (you guessed it!), their long ears. These bats vary in color, from pale yellowish-brown, to dark reddish-brown, and are about three inches long with a wingspan three times

their length! Like many bats, they have a voracious appetite for all sorts of insects including moths, flies, leafhoppers, caddisflies, beetles, and more. In other words - they are NOT picky eaters. Excitingly, echolocation calls of this bat species were recorded at the College Lodge Forest in 2014. The mature and old-growth forests make it perfect habitat for the Northern long-eared bat, which is important since our flying friend is federally listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

WORD TO THE NERD

Given the healthy bat habitat at the College Lodge Forest, it is likely that maternity colonies are present. These colonies are important to protect, as female Northern long-eared bats and their daughters return to their summer maternity range year after year. Providing stable, consistent maternity habitat is key to giving bat species the space they need to rebound from white-nose syndrome. Conserving the College Lodge Forest will protect this species and many more!