

april 2007

# HIGHLANDS JOURNAL

newsletter of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy

Dedicated to conserving the natural and cultural heritage of the Upper Delaware River region in New York and Pennsylvania

## PRESERVING FARMLAND IN SULLIVAN COUNTY NY

By Barbara Lewis

Alice and Bill Froelich's 23 acre farm in the rolling hills of western Sullivan County was prime land for development. Their family was grown and they were no longer able to farm their land, so what prompted them to decide to protect their land from subdivision and development rather than sell it to a developer?

They'd watched as farms shut down, open land disappeared, and development threatened to take away the open views they'd so enjoyed for 37 years from the top of their hill a mile and a half from the original Woodstock site. The Froelichs loved their land. Raised in Western New York State between two of the biggest Indian reservations in the East, Alice had learned to raise vegetables and chickens on her grandmother's farm as a child. Her father had taught her to help clear timber and "farm" the 150 acres of woods he so carefully tended there.

After marrying Bill and living in Long Island for a few years while finishing their education, they'd decided to move their growing family back "Upstate" to raise them in a rural setting. Their five daughters loved growing up in the country... gardening, riding their own horses, keeping a few head of cattle, and camping in the woods. "It was so good to just have them out there, where they could be kids," smiles Alice. Her daughters have continued to come back with their families to enjoy the open land, woods, and pond where many birds and wild animals gather.

Because of their reverence for the environment, their enjoyment of their hilltop farm, and the desire to preserve that land for their family, Alice and Bill decided to protect their farm. Hearing about the Delaware Highlands Conservancy from a neighbor, they started the process of placing

their land into an easement that prevents any subdivision, development, or further building on their land, except for an animal shelter or replacement buildings for the existing house, barn, and shed.

Bill became very ill, but the Froelichs moved forward with their plans, with the full support of their children. Though Bill died in September, just days before the easement was to be signed, Alice went ahead and put it in place before the end of 2006. Their 23 acres of high, rolling farmland will be protected from subdivision or development forever, whether it remains in their own family or is sold. It can be used for any type of non-commercial farming activities, but best of all, it can be enjoyed by the future generations of their family as it has been enjoyed by them, their children and grandchildren for the past 37 years.

Recalling the words of one of her Native American co-workers in Western New York who voiced the belief of her People that "Unto the seventh generation you had to take care of the land and the forest and the animals,"



Alice Froelich and her cat, Scooby-Doo

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## Delaware Highlands Conservancy

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### Upcoming Meetings:

Land Protection May 19  
Board Meeting June 9

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



In 2006 we protected an additional 2,700 acres across seven new properties. An unprecedented accomplishment in our short history. This brings our total acreage we help protect to almost 9,700 acres.

In June 1999 when the Conservancy set out a Strategic Plan it held less than 500 acres in easements, yet the visionary members of the board set a goal of 10,000 acres by the end of 2007. I am proud to report how close we are to meeting that original goal.

This success is a result of your dedicated support. Thank you.

Of the easements we closed this past year, two are profiled in this newsletter. We hope these snapshots give you insight into what we are accomplishing together. These landowners voluntarily gave up development rights to protect their land and leave a legacy for future generations. With your help, and your donations, we're able to help other landowners protect their land. Watch for upcoming issues of the newsletter where we profile others who take this same step and help us protect our rural quality of life in the Delaware Highlands. If our current work load is any indication, we hope to have lots of wonderful stories to share.

Late last year we received awards for grant funds restricted to the purchase of three new easements of approximately \$1.8 million. Money through the United State Fish and Wildlife Landowner Incentive Program administered by the Pennsylvania Commission will help us protect approximately 600 acres of wildlife habitat for species of special concern. Money through the New York Farmland Protection Implementation Grants program will help us protect a working dairy farm in Sullivan County.

Beyond these exciting projects, new tax incentives make it more attractive for landowners to voluntarily protect their land with conservation easements in 2007. We anticipate that it will be a busy year.

Carson Helfrich, President

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Alice asserts, "It's a good philosophy, and we've unfortunately lost that. We look to our own interests and sometimes don't even think of our children's interests as far as conservation goes."

Alice Froelich has thought of her children's interests, as well as those of the planet, by permanently protecting her farmland. In doing so, she is carrying on the conservationist beliefs of her own family and the sacred tradition of her Native American neighbors.



Bill Froelich

*(Photo by Jane Frye)*

# PRESERVING RURAL CHARACTER IN DAMASCUS

By Barbara Lewis

In 2006 Marty and Hedy Kunstmann contacted the Delaware Highlands Conservancy and placed 112 acres of their land in a conservation easement, specifying that it be excluded from future subdivision or development. Their easement protects open pastures, woodlands, wild berry patches, and a stream, and provides habitat for the animals that share their land. Regardless of whether their land stays in their family or is sold to outside buyers, that protection will stay with their land forever.

In the 1960's when the Kunstmanns were raising their family in Rockland County, NY, they began to feel the outflux of population from New York City encroaching on their neighborhood. Watching their natural surroundings shrinking around them, they explored northward and found themselves a piece of land on a pristine pond in Wayne County, PA and built themselves a cabin. Commuting to their country getaway on weekends, they would drive along Rt. 17 in Orange County NY and watch with growing concern as year after year more and more farmland was replaced by townhouse complexes, housing developments and shopping malls.

Growing to appreciate rural Wayne County with its expansive farms and large undeveloped areas, they also began to realize that these precious natural resources couldn't be taken for granted. They decided it was time to acquire more land in their rural haven.



*Marty and Hedy Kunstmann*

In 1994, while Marty was working as a chemist for a pharmaceutical company and Hedy was performing with the Rockland Symphony Orchestra, they purchased a 23-acre

lot in Damascus from a hunting club. A year later, they learned of a larger adjacent parcel about to go up sale and were able to acquire it as well. In 1998, as they were anticipating retirement, they bought a third parcel and began construction of a log home on it. In 2000 they were able to retire and take up full time residence in Wayne County.

"It's just so beautiful up here," says Hedy. She describes how she'd be driving along the country roads past farms and open lands and unexpectedly come across natural wonders. Once when a bobcat crossed right in front of her, she stopped, and the two stared at each other for several minutes before moving on.



"We very much enjoy the nature here," says Marty. A myriad of birds, deer, turkeys and even bears pass through their yard. Hedy is especially fascinated by a huge pileated woodpecker that visits almost daily, despite its shy nature and usual propensity to hide. Marty notes it gives them pleasure to walk through the woods on their property, observing the wildlife there and knowing that they are providing the habitat for those plants and animals to thrive. In fact, they have worked with a forester to manage their woods in a way that will allow for some timber to be harvested but also allow the trees and wildlife to benefit. They recently received an American Tree Farm designation for their efforts.

As the threat of development moved closer to them, when a large housing complex was proposed in nearby Tyler Hill, Marty & Hedy began to think about what they could do to keep their land in its pristine state for the future. "As much as possible we'd like to see it stay that way. You do what you can. You can't buy or protect everything, but at least in your own little corner of the world, you can do something about it," explained Hedy.

By placing a large part of their property into a

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## BE A LEGACY LEADER

Legacy Leaders is a special group of people who have generously provided for the future of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy through bequests and other life income gifts.

You can join this very special group and help the Conservancy preserve, protect, and enhance the land, water, ecological and recreational resources of the Upper Delaware River Valley long after you are gone.

Your tax advisor can inform you of the many ways you can make a charitable bequest to the Conservancy. Options include gifts of stock bonds, or IRAs or a simple sentence in your will bequeathing a specific dollar amount or percentage of your estate.

It may be as simple as: *"I bequeath to the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, a non-profit organization located in Hawley, PA, for its general purposes the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ " (or "\_\_\_\_\_% of my residuary estate".)*

For more information on creating a lasting gift or if you have already made a planned gift to Conservancy please contact Sue Currier at 570-226-3164.

## VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Learn how you can help Delaware Highlands Conservancy conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Upper Delaware River Region. Plan to attend a **Volunteer Training Day** at the Conservancy's new office at **508 River Street** in Hawley PA on **Saturday, April 14th at 2:00 pm.**

This 90 minute program will include an overview of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy field work, volunteer projects and an introduction to Conservation Easements, Baseline Documentation, and Annual Monitoring.

You might like to organize outings, monitor easements, help with the annual Meadow Party, be on a fund-raising committee, write articles for the newsletter, or provide general office support. Your help with any of these projects will further the Conservancy's valuable work and you will meet other interesting like-minded people.

### Giving Opportunity

#### **Conservation Easement**

#### **Bequest**

#### **Donation of Land**

#### **Donation of Appreciated Securities**

#### **Charitable Remainder Trust**

### Benefits to Donor

Protects donor's land. Potential federal income tax deductions; NY property tax credit; estate tax benefits

Estate tax benefits

Potential federal income tax deductions; estate tax benefits

Avoid capital gains tax; income tax deduction for full market value (if shares owned for more than one year)

Derive life income; federal income tax deduction; estate tax benefits

Please call the Conservancy at 570-226-3164 or email [land@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:land@delawarehighlands.org) to reserve a space at this workshop. If you are interested in volunteering, but cannot attend this program, please call and ask how you can learn more.



Sue Currier and volunteer Joan Thirion  
(Photo courtesy of Mary Baldwin and The Weekly Almanac)

## IN MEMORIAM

Memorial donations were received in loving memory of conservation easement donor Ken Knapp, Kay Brown, mother of Barbara Brown Kaighn, and Allen Sperling, friend of Bill Yeaman.



*MC Sandy Gabrielson  
Entertained with his wit*



*150 people anticipate the world premiere at  
Ehrhardt's Waterfront Resort*



*Krista Gromalski is  
congratulated by Peter Pinchot*

## NATURES KEEPERS GALA

On March 3, 150 people attended the Gala Premiere of *Nature's Keepers*. The special pre-release Director's Cut gave the audience a sneak peak at a documentary which will air on public television stations this fall.

The film highlights the people of Pike County who are working to educate and mobilize their community toward action on behalf of the land and the place they love. It shares a powerful message about Pike County's experience and documents how it takes the efforts of numerous dedicated individuals, from developers to environmental educators, to shape the community. Film producers and directors Carl Deitz and Andrew McCoy were present to

gauge the audiences reaction and garner feedback for the final film. *Nature's Keepers* was produced in association with executive producer Sean O. Strub and Heron's Eye Communications, Krista Gromalski and Sandy Long managing partners.

After the film, awards were presented to Ruth Jones for her lifetime of environmental work in the region, to Tom Hoff, for his land conservation efforts in Pike County, and to John Jose for his environmental education contributions.

Over \$7,500 was raised at the benefit to help the Delaware Highlands Conservancy continue its work. Thank you to everyone who participated and made the evening a success.

*Photos by David B. Soete*



*Claire Wildermuth and  
Kathleen Helfrich welcome guests*



*Ruth Jones accepts her Lifetime  
Achievement Award*



*John Jose accepts his Conservation Education award  
from Grace Wildermuth and Diana Olsheski*

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conservation easement adjacent to one that their neighbors Wendy Barnett and Mike Uretsky had already protected with the Conservancy the year before, they are helping to build a greenway in their neighborhood.

Marty and Hedy Kuntsmann are true stewards of the environment, doing their part to preserve the scenic wild land they love and to promote the importance of that preservation to their friends and neighbors in their local and extended communities. They are indeed protecting their "corner of the world."

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Call 570-226-3164 or email [info@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:info@delawarehighlands.org) for more information on any program.

## **April 17 Bringing Back the Chestnut Tree 7– 9 pm**

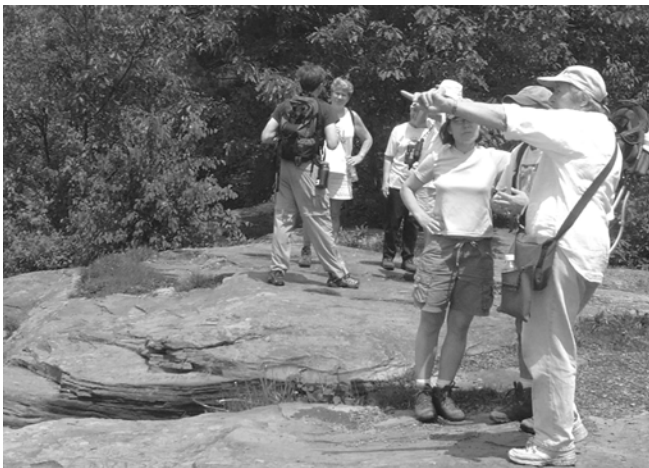
Robin Wildermuth will cover the history of the chestnut blight, characteristics of the tree, wildlife interactions and the program the American Chestnut Foundation scientists have created to bring back the tree. *Pike Conservation Partnership Program*. PPL Environmental Learning Center, Hawley, PA

## **May 5 Wildflower Walk 10:00 am**

Join us at the Butterfly Barn for this perfect opportunity to find, identify and photograph local spring wildflowers.

## **May 6 Hike to “The Ledges” 10:30 am**

Follow a NY State Forest trail up to a magnificent view of the Delaware River and the valley beyond. Bring your lunch and eat by a waterfall. Call for directions to the carpool location in Long Eddy, NY



## **May 9 Understanding Local Government 6:30 pm**

Peter Wulfhorst of the Penn State Cooperative Extension and Carson Helfrich, local planner, will talk about local government tax structure, local government spending and revenues, and the duties and responsibilities of local municipalities. *Pike Conservation Partnership Program*. PPL Environmental Learning Center, Hawley, PA

## **May 15 ABC's of Groundwater Protection Around the Home 7– 9:00 pm**

John Jose of the Pike County Conservation District will outline practical steps to developing a simple groundwater protection plan at home. Topics include: maintaining on-lot sewage treatment systems, installing a sanitary well cap, proper use and disposal of lawn and garden chemicals, water testing, and more. *Pike Conservation Partnership Program*. PPL Environmental Learning Center, Rt. 6, Hawley, PA

## **May 19 Spring Bird Walk at the Dorflinger-Suydam Wildlife Sanctuary 7:00 am**

Join Peter Wulfhorst local birding expert, for a two hour early morning walk in White Mills, PA . Bring your binoculars and learn to identify birds and their songs.

## **June 2 Canoe the Bashakill 10:30 am**

The BashaKill Wildlife Management Area is the largest freshwater wetlands in Southeastern New York and provides a unique opportunity to view a variety of birds and aquatic life. This is an easy paddle. Bring water, a snack, sunscreen, bug spray and field glasses, if you have them. Reservations are required. Call 570- 226-3164.



## **June 19 Citizens' Guide to Stream, Lake and Wetland Conservation 7-- 9 pm**

John Jose of the Pike County Conservation District will explain what residents can do in their own backyard to protect our local water resources, *Pike Conservation Partnership Program*. PPL Environmental Learning Center, Hawley, PA

## **June 23 Canoe the Upper Delaware 10:00 am**

Join us on a river trip from the Buckingham Access to Long Eddy. Reservations are required. Call 570-226-3164.

## **Aug 4 Dr. Ann Rhoads 10:00 am**

Join renowned author and botanist, Dr. Ann Rhoads, to explore the fields and forests of the Dorflinger-Suydam Wildlife Sanctuary in White Mills, PA . Please call the Conservancy at 570-226-3164 to reserve your space.

## **Aug 18 Party in the Meadow 12 — 5 pm**

Our Annual Meadow Party is moving to August. Mark your calendar now and watch for more details in the coming months.

Look for more events at [www.delawarehighlands.org](http://www.delawarehighlands.org)



# DOORS OPEN ON NEW CONSERVANCY OFFICE

It's official. The doors are open on our new location: 508 River Street in Hawley, PA.

Days after the Valentine's Day storm of 2007, a team of dedicated volunteers gathered to move the boxes, furniture and other meager belongings of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy into our new office.

The new office was possible only because of the dedication and support of our community. Henry Skier and AM Skier Insurance generously offered the Conservancy reduced rent in a building that was no longer needed for their staff.



*Don Downs — tackled any job necessary. Thank you!*

Don Downs, a man with a vision, set about a re-furbishing plan to make the office space sparkle and function for the Conservancy's work.

Now comfortably settled in the new space, we offer the following heartfelt thanks to the following: Don Downs — architect, visionary and general contractor. Gail Lowden — chief painter.

Bob Lowden — carpenter. Peter Downs — completer of all the dirty tasks. Jeanne Genzlinger selected the colors (inside and out). Niall Barrett ran the wires and installed the phone lines. Barbara Yeaman cleaned windows and the wonderful glass fireplace.



*A work party takes a short break to pose for posterity.*

Thank you to the volunteers who gave their time and literally blood, sweat but luckily no tears:

Gail and Bob Lowden, Bonnie Evans, Sandy Long, Don Hamilton, Carson Helfrich, Barbara and Reuel Kaighn, Peter, Don and Edie Downs, Grace, Claire, Cindy and Robin Wildermuth, Sigrid Wilshinsky, Grant and Jeanne Genzlinger, and all the others.

Thank you to the corporate sponsors : Gumble Brothers and Dirlam Lumber for their donations of material; VanGorder's Furniture for help with the move; Chris Marshal for his computer expertise; The Settlers Inn for trash removal; Juan Espino and the Looking Glass Gallery for loan of photos for the walls. Thank you to Clemleddy Construction for support at our old office space. Thank you to Henry Skier and AM Skier Insurance for our new office space. Drop by our new office and say hello.

**We invite you to our  
Open House on Saturday, May 19 at 1:00 pm.**



*Mid Renovation — wallpaper and carpet removed, the office looks its worst before the repairs begin*



*Open for business — Gail Lowden and Helle Henriksen at work in the new Conservancy headquarters.*

## DELAWARE HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP FORM

☐ **YES!** I want to conserve natural open space and support the Conservancy with my tax-deductible membership donation of:

☐ \$35-\$59 Friend; ☐ \$60-\$99 Supporter; ☐ \$100-\$249 Protector; ☐ \$250-\$499 Sustainer; ☐ \$500 Conservator; ☐ Other

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_ **EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ My check made payable to Delaware Highlands Conservancy is enclosed

☐ I prefer to pay by credit card: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Account #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form and donation payment to: **Delaware Highlands Conservancy, P.O. Box 218, Hawley, PA 18428-0218**

Delaware Highlands Conservancy is a tax-exempt organization as provided by IRS regulations. The official registration and financial information of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll-free, within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

## WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

The French Manor, Pennsylvania Tectonics Inc., Kristin Barron and John Ogozalek, Susan and Ben Baxt, Ernest Bertuzzi, William Bogartman, Ginny and Zeke Boyle, Deb and Paul DuCharme, Sheila Dugan, Barbara Finamore, Keith and Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, Scott Frazer, Justin Genzlinger, Dana Gumble, Gumble Brothers Inc., Charles Gumble, Marie Hasert, Joan Henry, Nicholas and Susan Iwanisziw, Laura Lander, Dale Laszig, Lin and Jerry O'Connor, Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Page, Robert Pali, Carrie Quick, William Reitsma, Mike Russen, Sam Shahr, George and Sissy Stone, Anthony and Jean Uva, Steven Vitale, Bruce and Anna Weidenbaum

## WISH LIST:

- Snow shovel
- Push broom and dust pan
- Recycle bins
- Draft dodger for bottom of door
- Insulation
- A volunteer with HTML experience to update the web site

## DELAWARE HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

serving New York and Pennsylvania  
P.O. Box 218 Hawley, PA 18428-0218



The door is open at the new office!

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