



DELAWARE  
HIGHLANDS  
CONSERVANCY

# Highlands Journal

Newsletter of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy

March 2012

*Conserving our natural heritage and quality of life in partnership with landowners and the communities of the Upper Delaware region.*

## The Perfect Partnership: The Delaware Highlands Conservancy Comes Together with the Eagle Institute

by Virginia Kennedy

**On February 10, the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, the region's foremost organization for the protection of healthy lands and waters, and the Eagle Institute, the Upper Delaware River Watershed's premier organization for the protection of eagles and the stewardship of their habitat, announced their merger.** The partnership is a wonderful development for eagle lovers and for all residents of the Upper Delaware River region for whom



Greg Belcamino, Conservancy President, and Sue Currier, Executive Director, with Lori McKean, Eagle Institute Founder. (center)

clean waters, healthy lands, and thriving wildlife are vital to quality of life. Going forward, the Eagle Institute will be a Project of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy.

Since its founding, the Eagle Institute has been hosted by the National Park Service and located in the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. As a Project of

the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, the Eagle Institute will increase its capacity for engaging visitors and residents with our iconic national bird and the beautiful forests and rivers that are home to it. Superintendent of Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, Sean McGuinness,

affirms that, "the Eagle Institute and the Delaware Highlands Conservancy are the best at what they do."

Together with the Park Service, this partnership will provide enhanced leadership in conservation in our region.

"I founded the Eagle Institute to support the return of the endangered eagle to the Upper

Delaware River region," states Eagle Institute founder and executive director, Lori McKean, "Nearly two decades ago, I dreamed things would turn out just as they have: The eagles are back in the Watershed and thriving, the Eagle Institute is supported and run by incredible volunteers, members, and contributors who are passionately concerned about the protection of our national symbol and its habitat, and we have educated nearly 50,000 people over the years about the critical role this region's healthy lands and clean water play in the survival of this magnificent bird. We are ready to open a new chapter in our success story."



Wintering bald eagles can often be seen perched in treetops above the Delaware River.

Photo by Dave Soete

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### **Land Protection:**

Melinda Meddaugh  
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### **Outreach:**

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[info@DelawareHighlands.org](mailto:info@DelawareHighlands.org)



## Conservancy Welcomes New Board Members

**The Conservancy offers an enthusiastic welcome to four new members of our Board of Directors:** Keith Williams, Manager of Lake Wallenpaupack Visitors Center, brings to the Conservancy his extensive knowledge of Northeastern Pennsylvania and all that our region has to offer to residents and visitors. Keith's wife, Dawn Williams, an elementary school teacher from Lake Wallenpaupack Area School District, also comes aboard. Dawn has been a volunteer with both the Sierra Club and Nature Conservancy, and is looking forward to contributing to the Conservancy's conservation success.

We also welcome Donovan Houck, a water quality specialist with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, who brings his professional expertise and passion for conservation to the Conservancy's land protection efforts. From the Sullivan County portion of our region, the Conservancy is excited to have Jeffrey Moore return to service on the Board. Jeff, a retired business owner, is an artist and musician deeply attached to his own beautiful farm in Sullivan County and deeply committed to the protection of our unique and special region.



*Left to Right: Keith Williams, Dawn Williams, Michael Geitz, Denise Frangipane, Greg Belcamino, Grant Genzlinger, Donovan Houck, Jeffrey Moore, and Krista Gromalski. Camera Shy: Joe Fowler, Barbara Yeaman.*

**The Conservancy is delighted to have all four new board members along with their expertise and passion for conservation priorities as part of the organization.** Get to know all the Conservancy Board members. Check out our board member bios at [www.delawarehighlands.org](http://www.delawarehighlands.org).

## Like Us on Facebook

**Want to do something free, easy, and fun to support the Conservancy and our conservation mission? Visit our Facebook page! 'Like' us, and get your friends to 'Like' us, too.**



Facebook is a great way to spread the word about all the Conservancy does to protect the lands, waters, local economies, and quality of life of our unique and beautiful Upper Delaware River region. And it's a great way to get the message to your friends, family, and network, that what we have in our region is worth protecting.

**So go ahead – LIKE US! – and help spread the Conservancy's vital conservation message.**



# Appreciating Nature's Design

By Bethany Keene

**When Rudy Magnan was in his twenties, he knew he wanted to invest in some land in rural New York State. Family friends told him about a beautiful property in Bethel, Sullivan County, NY close to the Bethel Woods Performing Arts Center, the site of the 1969 Woodstock Festival.** Rudy visited the property and befriended the owner, a man who used the land as a dairy farm and had never wanted to sell it. Over the years, Rudy made a point to visit the owner and help around the farm. The farmer eventually agreed to sell the land to Rudy, provided he could live out the rest of his life in the home on the property. The farmer passed away in the 1960s, and Rudy got to work restoring the house and determining what he wanted to do his 46-acres of land.

Rudy used the land for raising cattle through the late 1980s, and the farm became one of the first suppliers in the area to sell natural beef. He also planted a vineyard as well as a garden to grow a variety of vegetables. These ventures were challenging to maintain with temporary caretakers renting the home and caring for the land.



*Trees reflected in the mirror surface of one of the property's small ponds.*

**Though Rudy lived on Long Island at the time, "my heart has always been up there," he says.**

Eventually, one of the tenants was interested in purchasing the house with one acre, but with the possibility of Marcellus Shale drilling in the area, the tenant was concerned Rudy might sell or lease the other 45 acres to a gas company. Rudy assured him that this would not happen, and began discussions in 2007 with the Conservancy regarding permanently protecting the land.

**In December 2011, the Conservancy finalized a conservation easement on the property. This easement was also made possible with grant funding support from the Common Waters Fund, which helps private landowners sustainably manage and preserve land and water resources.**



*Scenic view from the Town road which traverses the Magnan property.*

**Rudy is now assured that no matter who owns this beautiful property in the future, its scenic views, prime agricultural land, and valuable wetlands and tributaries with high water quality will be protected from development.** From Rudy's perspective, "Preserving nature's incredibly intelligent design is what it's all about." He is currently writing a book about biomimicry, and discusses the incredible shift in mindset he experienced due to his appreciation of the beauty and inherent value of his property.

Rudy believes that the work of the Conservancy will be looked upon historically as a major shift in thinking toward a real appreciation for the intelligent design of nature and the need to protect lands and waters now and for the future. **The Conservancy appreciates the efforts of landowners like Rudy who want to ensure that land remains protected for future generations.** This easement is adjacent to an existing 119-acre easement -- Lemons Brook Farm -- also held by the Conservancy. The two properties now form a permanently protected greenway.

Rudy points out the importance of recognizing plants and animals living their own lives, separate from human influence, and becoming connected and balanced with those patterns of living. "If we ruin that balance, we only destroy ourselves," he says. "Nature is a force to be reckoned with and has a way of organizing that man could never, ever control."

# Upcoming Events

## **Mar 29 – Financial Benefits of Land Conservation, PPL Learning Center, Hawley, PA, 7 – 9 pm**

Private landowners, learn how to keep cherished lands in the family and protect the landscape in perpetuity. Delaware Highlands Conservancy Executive Director Sue Currier discusses how conservation and agricultural easements are key tools for Wayne County and Pike County agricultural and woodland owners.

## **April 14 – Emily Dickinson's Garden, PPL Learning Center, Hawley, PA 2 - 3:30 pm**

Join naturalist Ed Wesely for a virtual tour of the fields and streams that nineteenth-century poet, Emily Dickinson, knew around her Amherst home and of the spring wildflowers that inspired her.

## **April 14 – Improving Your Woods For Wildlife Forestry Field Day, Lackawaxen, PA, 9am-12pm**

Join the Pike—Monroe Woodland Owners Group for tips about how to manage your woodland for wildlife.



## **April 20-21 - Women and Their Woods Spring Retreat, Bradford County, PA**

Participate in a two-day hands-on event for women forest landowners focused on cost sharing, tree planting and management of invasive plants. Space is limited.

## **April 21 – Pike/Wayne Earth Day at PPL, Hawley, PA 10am-4pm**

Join the Conservancy and other local conservation groups for activities, entertainment and educational programs for kids and adults to celebrate Earth Day at the PPL Environmental Learning Center. Visit the website at [www.pikewayneearthday.org](http://www.pikewayneearthday.org).

## **April 28 – Foods of the Delaware Highlands Dinner, The Settler's Inn, Hawley, PA 6pm**

Join us for the Annual Foods of the Delaware Highlands wine & food pairing dinner at The Settlers Inn. This year's event celebrates the Perfect Partnership between the Conservancy and the Eagle Institute. course meal with a limit of 125 people. This dinner sells out annually, so register early.



## **April 30 – Conservation Subdivision and Design Workshop, CVI Building, Ferndale, NY 5 – 8pm**

Join the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, Sullivan Renaissance, and the Sullivan County Division of Planning and Environmental Management for a workshop on conservation subdivision, conservation design, and the legal tools necessary to implement these techniques, led by planners and legal professionals. **Prior registration required.**

## **May 5 – Bird Walk with Peter Wulforth, Bethel, NY 7:30 am**

Join the Delaware Highlands Conservancy and the Sullivan County Audubon for a two hour early morning walk. Bring your binoculars and learn to identify birds and their songs.

## **June 2 – Native Plants Walk, Camp Speers, Dingmans Ferry, PA, 9 am - 12 pm**

Enjoy a walk with renowned author, Dr. Ann Rhoads, Senior Botanist of the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania who will discuss, illustrate, and answer your questions about the native plants found in a wetland community.

**Call the Conservancy at 570-226-3164 or 845-583-1010 or visit us online at [DelawareHighlands.org](http://DelawareHighlands.org) for details and to register for events.**



# Foods of the Delaware Dinner Celebrates the Eagle

The Conservancy is once again preparing for our annual Foods of the Delaware dinner to be held Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at the Settler's Inn in Hawley.

This year's dinner will celebrate the "Perfect Partnership" of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy and the Eagle Institute (see cover page article). Our Foods of the Delaware dinner is an important annual event for the Conservancy that helps to raise both resources and awareness for our conservation mission.

The dinner features a live auction of exciting items from a guided eagle tour along the Delaware weekend to a fabulous stay in New York City. And this year for the first time, dinner attendees will have the opportunity to bid in a silent auction highlighting the special people and places of the Upper Delaware River Region.

Your invitations have arrived by now. Please join us, and consider attending the dinner at a sponsorship level. You'll have a lovely evening of fine foods and wines, the opportunity to bid on some truly exciting auction items, and best of all, the satisfaction of knowing you are making an important contribution to the Conservancy's ability to protect our region's lands, waters, and quality of life.

## We express very special thanks to our sponsors:

Al and Bonnie Albinson  
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Greg Belcamino and Judith Welcom  
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Tony Waldron  
Keith and Dawn Williams  
Sigrid Wilshinsky  
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**Become a sponsor, and guarantee your seats for this year's dinner. Call 570-226-3164 or 845-583-1010 or email [info@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:info@delawarehighlands.org) for more information.**



## A few of our AUCTION SELECTIONS

Sean Strub, *Auctioneer*

### Luxurious Escape

A week in St. Martin in a private villa with an exquisite pool and gorgeous views

### Exciting Getaway

A weekend in New York with accommodation at the Phillips Club, behind the scenes tour of the Met, and more

### Soaring Experience

An Eagle watching weekend in the Delaware River Region with B&B accommodations, guided eagle tour, and dinner

### Heavenly Evening

A farm to table evening under the stars at the Ledges Hotel and Glass Restaurant overlooking a spectacular waterfall

### Sporting Challenge

A day of sporting clays and lunch at Hudson Farm, Andover, NJ with Michael Geitz

### Outdoor Tranquility

Guided fly fishing on a private trout stream with Conservancy President Greg Belcamino

### New this year:

**Silent Auction** highlighting the bounty of our Upper Delaware River Region's destinations, businesses, and artists.

## Conservancy Moves: New Sullivan County Location

In 2009, salmon fisherman, marine biologist, and Sullivan County native, Lou Barr, protected his family's 119 acre farm in Kauneonga Lake, with a conservation easement. Because Lou and his wife, Nancy, live most of the year in Alaska, they offered to rent space in the family home on the property to the Conservancy as office space.

Last month, the Conservancy moved into the cozy, wood-heated farmhouse. After a great team effort by staff and board members, some space has been converted for our New York office. Because the rolling farm and forestlands have been permanently protected, they will be the perfect environment for fun, educational outdoor programming and events.

"When our conservation easement was completed in October, 2009, I felt we had accomplished a long-held goal," states Lou Barr, who is pleased that his house will serve as the Conservancy's office in Sullivan County. "Not only have we protected the place where I grew up, but that place can now serve as an example for other landowners."

Lou hopes that the presence of the Conservancy on his protected property will highlight the value of private landowners permanently protecting their land. "It may even hasten additional land protection in Sullivan County," Lou affirms, "A very satisfying bonus to our original plan of simply safeguarding our own land."



*Melinda Meddaugh, Land Protection Coordinator and Denise Frangipane, Director, consider photographs for the conference room of the New York office.*

New York Land Protection Coordinator, Melinda Meddaugh is excited about the possibilities of new office, too. Melinda believes that, "being able to have programs right on the property means people can see first hand why it's such a great thing for the whole community when landowners choose to protect their land."

Join us for a program, and check out the Conservancy's new space. Keep a special watch for coming details on our "Thank Our Members and Volunteers" party planned for September 8 and the launch of our "teaching garden" spring of 2013. **We look forward to seeing you in New York.**

**Help inaugurate our new space. Experience the first program at our new Sullivan office:**

**May 5 – Sunrise Bird Walk with Peter Wulforst at Conservancy NY Office: 120 Segar Road, Kauneonga Lake (Swan Lake in GPS) NY 7:30am**

Join the Delaware Highlands Conservancy and Sullivan County Audubon for a two hour early morning walk. Bring your binoculars and learn to identify birds and their songs. Call the Conservancy office at 570-226-3164 or 845-583-1010 for more details.



**Executive Director Sue Currier pitches in to clean the floors of our new New York office.**



## Thanks for your Hospitality

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy sends sincere thanks to two gracious hosts who have given us a home in Pennsylvania and in New York.

### Thank You A.M. Skier

**A.M. Skier is a longstanding, family-owned insurance agency in Hawley, Pennsylvania. As part of Skier's generous and sincere efforts to support local organizations, for the past five years they have provided the Conservancy's River Street, Hawley location, at very low cost.**

The Conservancy and A.M. Skier have recently renewed the lease, which now provides for the Conservancy's location rent-free. The Conservancy is extremely grateful to Mr. Henry Skier and A.M. Skier for their generosity and their dedication to supporting the local businesses of our region. Along with providing the Conservancy our charming and comfortable office space in Hawley, A.M. Skier's support of our organization frees valuable financial resources to apply directly to conservation and education efforts. Thank you, Mr. Skier and A.M. Skier Insurance; the Conservancy deeply appreciates your civic-mindedness and your on-going support!

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### Thank you Sullivan County

**As part of a generous agreement with the Sullivan County Legislature, the Sullivan Planning and Environmental Management Department has provided office space to the Conservancy in its Monticello office location for the past three years.**

In that time, it has been the Conservancy's pleasure to become familiar with the hardworking staff and supporters of the Planning and Environmental Management Department and to have opportunities to partner on important conservation projects in Sullivan County. The Conservancy is moving on to its new office location in Bethel, a cozy farmhouse on the 119-acre Lemons Brook Farm on which the Conservancy holds an easement (see previous page). We leave our gratitude with the Sullivan County Legislature, General Services, and Sullivan County Planning and Environmental Management Department, and we look forward to continued partnerships in achieving conservation priorities in New York.

*The Conservancy moves to wood-heated farmhouse at Lemons Brook Farm, the property of Lou and Nancy Barr, on which the Conservancy holds an easement. Stop by 120 Segar Rd, Kauneonga Lake, NY, and see our new office space.*



(Continued from page 1)

Conservancy Executive Director, Sue Currier, is excited about the possibilities: "Coming together with the Eagle Institute means we'll be stronger. In these days of doing more with less, leveraging the resources of both organizations means those resources will go further. By combining the energy of dedicated members, volunteers, and supporters, we'll protect more eagle habitat than



Greg Belcamino and Lori McKean discuss future possibilities for the new partnership, while members of the press and the public scope eagles above the Delaware River.

ever. We'll reach more people with the message that the eagle thrives when the lands and waters where it lives are healthy and protected."

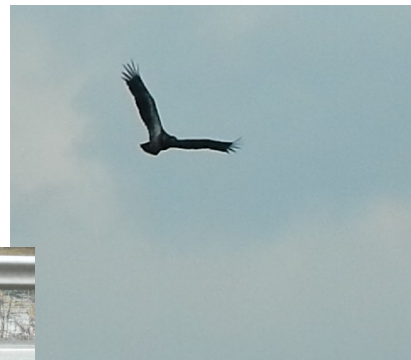
"We know what it feels like to watch an eagle fly freely; to see it dive for its food or perch majestically against a winter blue sky" adds Lori McKean, "We all realize that if the eagles are thriving, the lands and waters where they live are healthy for humans, too. Eagles are good for our hearts, our spirits; their healthy habitat is good for our bodies. We need to make sure the eagles and their habitat are protected now and into the future."

This is a great move for the Conservancy," affirms Conservancy founder, Barbara Yeaman, "the Eagle Institute's passion for protecting eagles together with the Conservancy's passion for protecting the lands and waters where eagles live truly is the perfect partnership."

**The board and staff of the Conservancy are enthusiastic about the unlimited potential of this new partnership to protect the eagle and its habitat and to build support for the Conservancy's conservation mission in the region.**

**Come soar with us! Check out our "eagles" page at [DelawareHighlands.org](http://DelawareHighlands.org). We look forward to sharing this new and wonderful journey with you.**

Eagle watchers follow the path of a soaring eagle during a guided eagle tour organized in celebration of the "perfect partnership."



In celebration of the Conservancy's merger with the Eagle Institute, the Conservancy, the Eagle Institute, and the Basha Kill Area Association partnered to sponsor two guided eagle tours. Both tours, one morning and one afternoon, filled up with enthusiastic eagle watchers from all over the region. The tours were focused on the New York side of the Delaware River. Eagle Institute volunteer tour guides, Brad Orey and John "Jan" Lokuta communicated their wide ranging knowledge of eagles to participants, and area eagles proudly showed off their strength and beauty.



# Conservancy Unveils New Website

by Bethany Keene

**In early January 2012, the Conservancy unveiled a brand-new, completely redesigned website with a variety of new features and benefits.** The new site, made possible by the ongoing support of our members and some grant funding, is still located at our current URL, **DelawareHighlands.org**.

DelawareHighlands.org is a central hub for all the Conservancy's activities and is designed to be user-friendly and easy to navigate. It is a great place to find details about our upcoming fun and educational events for the year, and to sign up to participate. **If you are interested in becoming a member and joining the Conservancy community, supporting our efforts with a donation, or volunteering some time in the office or at one of our events, the website provides the details.**



**Of course, DelawareHighlands.org is also a great place to learn all about conservation easements and how they help landowners in our region permanently protect their land.** We've provided answers to frequently asked questions as well as a discussion of the financial benefits of an easement. Click the 'contact us' button to get in touch and set up an appointment to discuss options for protecting your land in more detail.

The new website also includes a complete archive of landowner stories about people in our region who have chosen to protect their land with an easement. Learn why landowners make this decision, as well as various options to tailor an easement toward individual goals. You might even recognize some of your friends or neighbors in one of our stories. In addition, you can use the website to get to know our staff and board members, as well as our partner organizations.

# Area Teens Participate in "Understanding Nature" Workshop

**How would you define "nature?" Are people "nature?" What do a house that beavers build and a house that people build have in common?**

**These are just some of the questions addressed by local youths ages twelve to nineteen who participated in the Delaware Highlands Conservancy's first "Understanding Nature" workshop.**

Participants explored what nature really means and what it means to them through reading and discussing the poems of Jimmy Santiago Baca and Mary Oliver with Conservancy Outreach and Development Manager – and former high school and college English teacher – Virginia Kennedy. Conservancy Board member and writer and poet, Krista Gromalski, and journalist and poet, Sandy Long, led the creative part of the session guiding participants toward composing their own poems. The afternoon finished with a guided hike on the Riverwalk along the Lacakawaxen in Hawley, led by Conservancy Land Protection Coordinator, Jake Hendee.



"I liked the walk a lot," states twelve year old participant, Devon, "the poetry was fun and interesting, and I learned a lot." All the participants finished the afternoon asking for a longer hike next time. The Conservancy looks forward to obliging at future workshops.



## 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

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

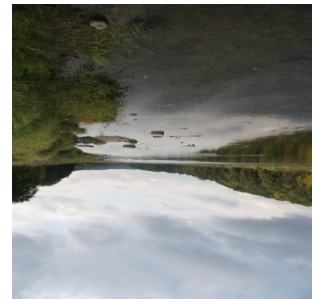
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## JOIN THE TEAM: VOLUNTEER TODAY

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy is always looking for new volunteers — for an afternoon, an activity or for a longer term commitment on one of our committees. Call the office to find out how you can help.

### INSIDE

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