



SPRING 2016 • [WWW.RENSTRUST.ORG](http://WWW.RENSTRUST.ORG)

## Three New Protected Properties

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Our most recent land protection project involves the expansion of our Robert P. Ingalls Nature Preserve in Stephentown. Thanks to several very generous anonymous donors, we purchased an adjacent 20.5 acres, expanding our nature preserve to 50.5 acres. The new land includes a variety of forest types with very large trees. It has slopes with small ravines, wet seeps, and springs, which offer habitat for spring wildflowers, mosses and liverworts.

All of the newly acquired land lies on the far side of the new foot bridge that Michael Beskid, together with other members of Boy Scout Troop 525, designed and built for his Eagle Scout Project this past fall. The bridge spans the Black Brook, a native brook trout spawning stream that flows through a scenic ravine in the preserve. It is just past the bench donated by Bob and Jean Poppei in honor of the Ingalls family. Our trail team has since established a trail to part of the original preserve on the far side of the bridge, and plans to build more trails in the spring.

The Robert P. Ingalls Preserve is named in memory of Rensselaer Land Trust's former Vice President and longtime Board member Bob Ingalls. "We are grateful to our supporters who have made this expansion possible. It is a fitting way to honor Bob and the community that he loved," said Kristina Younger, Rensselaer Land Trust President.

The preserve is very beautiful! Take an afternoon this spring to enjoy it. It is free to the public and open from dawn to dusk. Parking lot is located on Garfield Road, just south of the intersection of Garfield and Horse Heaven Road.

Many of you have visited our Kinderhook Creek Nature Preserve at 300 Martha Hicks Road in Nassau. In the process of accepting land donations from David and Lucy Gaskell, Ken York, Bob and Jennifer Newton, and the Edward W. Golden Foundation, the Land Trust hired surveyor Ray Smith to locate the boundaries. Much to everyone's surprise, Ray determined that right in the middle of our preserve was a 12.5-acre parcel that did not belong to anyone. That meant that by default Rensselaer County owned it.

*Continued on page 2*

# Protected Properties, Cont.

With the agreement of the neighboring landowners, we approached the county and asked that the land be given to us to be included in our nature preserve. It worked—our preserve grew to 85 acres! Thank you, Rensselaer County Executive Kathy Jimino and Rensselaer County Legislators!

If you have not seen our Kinderhood Creek Nature Preserve, take an afternoon and visit it. It's free and open to the public for fishing, hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, nature study and enjoyment. This preserve is a good example of neighbors coming together to protect a beautiful part of the county forever.

John and Linda Gowdy recently donated a working forest conservation easement on 62 acres in Poestenkill. A working forest easement means that the land is forever protected from development but the owners can still harvest timber, provided they do so under a sustainable management plan. This type of conservation easement keeps the land economically productive while preserving it as undeveloped forest. The easement also protects wildlife and plant habitat. Woods with different canopy levels and different tree ages provide a range of habitats which support great ecological diversity. This easement property includes a beautiful wooded hillside that helps protect the water quality of the Newfoundland Creek, a Class C(T) native trout stream that flows into the Poesten Kill and on to the Hudson River. The Gowdys observed, "For the last 35 years we have enjoyed walking, skiing, snowshoeing and animal

watching in our woods. We are very satisfied knowing that this land will always be protected so others, in the near and distant future, will have the same enjoyment."

The property is very close to our Sluyter Conservation Easement, a 105-acre protected parcel which abuts an 87-acre parcel owned by a fish and game club. Together the three properties comprise a 254-acre open space area. Thank you, John and Linda Gowdy, for your foresight and your donation of a conservation easement to Rensselaer Land Trust.

## Like What We Do? We Can Use Your Help!

We depend on our volunteers to accomplish our work. Interested in something specific? Join a committee. Can't commit to something regular and on-going? Volunteer at one of our workdays. Love being outside but don't want to deal with meetings? Join our trails crew. Into technology? Assist us with website updates. Like our preserves? Steward a preserve or monitor a conservation easement. Have special knowledge or skills? Lead an outing or workshop. Concerned for the future? Write articles and help us with our outreach. Creative? Take short nature videos and trail videos for our website. Bring us your ideas. We also have openings on our Board of Directors—if you'd like to become very involved in our work, and have skills and time to contribute, please let us know. Call Christine at 518-659-5263 or email at [Christine@renstrust.org](mailto:Christine@renstrust.org).



## From the President

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As I take on the role of President to the Rensselaer Land Trust, I am grateful for the legacy of those who came before me to form, nurture, and mature this organization. We closed 2015 by bringing our directly protected acres up to a total of 1,250.60, consisting of eight public nature preserves (394.66 acres) and 15 privately-held conservation easement properties of 855.94 acres. This does not count the projects where we have partnered with other organizations, such as the recently funded Forest Legacy Program (12,800 acres), expansions to the Dyken Pond Environmental Center, trail projects, and more! This is a proud legacy to be a part of.

As members and supporters of the Rensselaer Land Trust, you can continue to expect that we will stay focused on our land conservation mission, while presenting programs and resources to increase appreciation and use of Rensselaer County's natural beauty. Our County-wide Conservation Plan will provide direction based on data and public input for preservation priorities. We will partner with others that share our goals to get even more done. We will do this while upholding the standards and practices that our accredited status recognizes. We will manage the organization, and the trust that you place in it through your loyal contributions, so that we are financially sustainable and here for the long term. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

*Kristina Younger, President*

## New Board Members

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### **Trix Niernberger, Petersburg**



Trix comes to Rensselaer Land Trust with over 30 years of working with not-for-profits in a variety of positions including Executive Director. Trix is currently Senior Health Policy Analyst with Computer Sciences Corporation on the NYS Health Exchange.

### **David Gaskell, West Sand Lake**



David became involved with the land trust when he donated the original parcel that has expanded to become the 85-acre Kinderhook Preserve. A

lifelong lover of the land and Master Forester, David brings a world of practical experience to conservation in Rensselaer County.

## Farewell to Board Member Stacey Goldstein

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Rensselaer Land Trust is thankful for the eight years of service, commitment and support Stacey Goldstein gave as a volunteer director on our board. Stacey served as our Secretary and served on the Executive, Finance and Legal committees. In addition, Stacey provided pro bono legal services and advice and she was a steward for several of our conservation easements. We will miss her. Thank you Stacey for your time, talent, knowledge, labor and energy.

## FEBRUARY

### Snowshoe Class at Kinderhook Creek Nature Preserve

Saturday, February 20 • 10:00 a.m.

Bad weather date Sunday, February 21

Want to gain confidence on your snowshoes? Learn the best techniques and see the beauty of the Kinderhook Creek in winter. Limited to 10 people. Cost \$10 per person. Participants need to bring their own snowshoes. Class led by Adirondack Guide Fred McCagg. To register, contact Peter Wood, [chez2p@fairpoint.net](mailto:chez2p@fairpoint.net) or (518)766-5527.

## MARCH

### The Failure of Markets: How We Have Changed Our Natural World

Thursday, March 17 • 6:00 p.m., East Greenbush Library

"The Failure of Markets" Dr. John Gowdy, RPI Professor of Environmental Economics, presents how changing human activity is affecting the natural world through the two major transitions in our relationship with nature: agriculture and fossil fuels. Free and open to the public.

### Using Solar Energy Even If You Thought You Couldn't!

Thursday, March 24 • 7:00 p.m., East Greenbush Library

Solarize Troy brings you new information on how you can use solar energy to decrease energy cost and be part of the climate change solution even if your home is not appropriate for solar panels. More than ever putting solar panels on your roof is one of the best investments a homeowner can make. But if for whatever reason your home isn't suitable for on-site solar panels or if you're a renter, there are now options with a recent change in New York State. Homeowners and renters can now own a share of an off-site solar panel installation and get nearly the same benefit on their power bills as if the panels were installed on-site. This informative presentation will cover the "shared solar" option and answer your questions about solar panels, on-site or otherwise. Presenter Kevin Carpenter, a solar energy enthusiast for many years and DEC employee, has built both passive solar and photovoltaic solutions for his home. He has been a key member of the Solarize Troy 2014 and 2015 campaigns. Free and open to the public.

## APRIL

### Fish Fest and Dinner

More details to follow—keep watch on our website and e-news for more details.



### Annual Tomhannock Reservoir Shoreline Cleanup: Volunteer Day

Saturday, April 16 • 9:00 a.m.—Noon

We need you! This reservoir provides drinking water to over 135,000 people in our region. Meet at the NYS DEC public access parking lot on NYS Route 7 just before the causeway over the reservoir. Bring gloves. Garbage bags are provided. We will work regardless of the weather. To register, contact Paul Schroeder, (518)-674-2480 or [pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com).



Photo Credit: Beth Fishkind—[www.flickr.com/photos/bcfoto/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/bcfoto/)

### Song Bird Migration Walk

Saturday, April 30 • 7:30–9:30 a.m. (rain date May 1st)

Song Bird Migration Walk, joint event with the Audubon Society of the Capital Region on one of our nature preserves TBD. Limited to 15 people. Bring binoculars, bug spray and wear sturdy shoes for hiking trails through the woods. Walk led by John Loz of Audubon Society of the Capital Region. Register to reserve your spot by calling Sally Lawrence at 518-674-2669 or via email [lawres@sage.edu](mailto:lawres@sage.edu).

## MAY

### Bird Language Workshop with Kevin Bose

Saturday, May 7 • 9:00 a.m.—Noon

At Dyken Pond Environmental Center

When we understand the vocalizations of birds, unseen happenings become more visible to us. As our awareness expands and our disturbance lessens, the fox, hawk and weasel hidden in the landscape are revealed. Instructor Kevin Bose has an endless supply of excitement for bird language, wild plants, tracks, and any other natural mystery. Kevin will give an introduction about bird language, then lead a "bird sit," or bird language observation. Everyone's observations will be combined to give a story of the land. Kevin sees nature connection as a powerful tool not only for bringing out an individual's gifts, but also for rebuilding the "village" in the human community. Limited to 20 attendees, fee \$15 or \$10 for members of Friends of Dyken Pond or Rensselaer Land Trust. To pre-register, contact Lisa Hoyt at (518) 658-2055 or [dykenpond@gmail.com](mailto:dykenpond@gmail.com).

### Riverkeeper Sweep Cleanup: Volunteer Day

Saturday May 7 • 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Join us in our second annual Riverkeeper Sweep cleanup workday at our Staalesen Preserve expanded this year to include Burden Pond. Workday is joint with City of Troy and PostContemporary. We will work regardless of weather. Come for the whole day or a part of it. To register, contact Joe Durkin at (518) 279-9870 or [jdurkin1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jdurkin1@nycap.rr.com) or Bob Crowley, (518) 283-7364 or [crowleyrh@aol.com](mailto:crowleyrh@aol.com).

### Wildflower Hike with Tom Phillips through Mattison Hollow

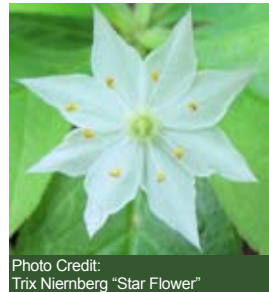


Photo Credit: Trix Niernberg "Star Flower"

Sunday, May 22 • 1:00–3:00 p.m.

Join us for the annual spring wildflower walk with Tom Phillips. We will hike toward the Taconic Crest on the Mattison Hollow Trail. Mattison Hollow has many interesting early spring flowers along a scenic stream with several small waterfalls. We'll also listen and search for migrating song birds and warblers. We may also look for old charcoal kilns that are remnants of an old Rensselaer County industry. Meet at the Berlin Central School on Route 22 in Berlin at 1:00 p.m. where we will carpool to the trail head. The hike does involve moderately steep climbing so sturdy footwear, snacks and water are recommended. \$5, members free. To register, contact Tom Phillips at [mossvet@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mossvet@nycap.rr.com).

## JUNE

### Learn Basic Mushroom Identification with Mycologist Sue Van Hook in the Classroom

Tuesday, June • 7:00–8:30 p.m. (date TBA)

Spend 1½ hours with mycologist Sue Van Hook learning the basics of mushroom identification and absorb Sue's enthusiasm for the beauty and diversity of local mushrooms. Your walks in the woods will be changed forever as you begin to identify mushrooms you used to not even see. Registration fee is \$10/person. Location: TBD. To register, contact Marcy Steinberg at [marcygs@aol.com](mailto:marcygs@aol.com), (518) 674-2171, or register online at [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org).



Photo Credit: [www.flickr.com/photos/bugeaters/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/bugeaters/)

### Fly Fishing for Women, with Trout Unlimited

Saturday, June 11 • 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Think fly fishing is just for men? Think again! In this hands-on workshop, learn the basics from an experienced fly fisherwoman. No experience required! Rods, reels, waders and flies provided. \$10 non-members, \$5 members of TroutUnlimited or Rensselaer Land Trust. To register, contact Jenny Prazak, [jprazak@vha.com](mailto:jprazak@vha.com) or 908-803-0247 (cell). More details online at [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org).

### Hoosick River Paddle

Saturday, June 25 • 9:00 a.m.

Enjoy our annual 8-mile flat water paddle down the Hoosick River, watch for great blue heron, maybe an eagle and drift under the only covered bridge in Rensselaer County. We travel from our boat launch in Eagle Bridge to the Johnsonville Dam. Provide your own boat and PFD. Bring snacks and water. Paddle is concurrent with the annual workday to clear a path through the dense water chestnut growth at the take out (see below), so if you are inspired, you can eat lunch with the crew and help pull water chestnut in the afternoon. Hoosick River boat launch is approximately one mile west of Eagle Bridge on the north side of Route. 67, at the DEC sign. Charge \$5, members free. To register, contact Paul Schroeder (518) 674-2480 or [pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com)

### 2nd Annual Water Chestnut Pull at the Johnsonville Dam on the Hoosick River: Volunteer Day

Saturday, June 25 • 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

The water chestnuts have invaded the boat launch on the Hoosick River just above the Johnsonville Dam! Join us to learn more about this plant and be part of a multi-year control effort. Workday will be from 9-5. If you only have part of the day or 2 hours we can use your energy. Lunch and snacks provided. If you have a rowboat, kayak, or canoe, please bring them. A limited supply of waders will also be available. Co-sponsored by Brookfield Renewables, the Hoosick River Watershed Association, and the Johnsonville Fire Department Explorer Post. To register, contact Kristina Younger at (518) 527-6577 or [key12061@gmail.com](mailto:key12061@gmail.com).

## JULY

### Bog Exploration at Mud Lake Preserve

Saturday, July 9 • 10:00 a.m.

Our Mud Lake Preserve in Sand Lake contains a classic kettlehole bog with a floating bog mat, surrounded by a spruce-tamarack swamp. Ecologist Dr. David Hunt will show us the unusual plants living here, including insect-eating pitcher plants and sundews, and some plants rare in Rensselaer County. The walk will be short but wet and adventurous. Wear footwear you can get very wet. Charge \$5, members free. To register, contact Nick Conrad, (518) 279-1963 or [nbconrad@msn.com](mailto:nbconrad@msn.com).

### Bennington Battlefield Historic Park Hike

Saturday, July 16 • 11:00 a.m.

Learn about the history of a pivotal battle of the Revolutionary War. The Battle of Bennington was a major battle of General John Burgoyne's Saratoga Campaign. A detachment of Crown forces sent to procure much needed supplies in the town of Bennington were roundly defeated, paving the way to victory at Saratoga. Hiking boots are required. Bring a bag lunch if you want to picnic afterwards. Joint outing with Grafton Lakes State Park. Limited to 20 people. To register, contact David Pitlyk at (518)279-1155 or [david.pitlyk@parks.ny.gov](mailto:david.pitlyk@parks.ny.gov).

### Wilderness Navigation Class at Kinderhook Creek Nature Preserve

Saturday, July 23 • 10:00 a.m. (rain date July 24)

Learn to use a map, compass and GPS and never get lost. Course is led by Adirondack Guide Fred McCagg. Limited to 10 people. Cost \$10 per person. To register, contact Rebecca Krakowiak at (716)939-8910 or [krakowir@gmail.com](mailto:krakowir@gmail.com).

## AUGUST

### Tour of the Wyomanock Center for Sustainable Living and Potluck Dinner

Friday, August 12 • 3:45 p.m. followed by group potluck dinner

The Wyomanock Center for Sustainable Living is a not-for-profit, farm-based educational center. Throughout the year they offer farm-based educational workshops, monthly community potlucks, and nature walks. Come see what's happening at the farm, learn more about the programs they offer, and get a taste of what they've got growing! Folks can also visit the farm stand where they offer grass-fed beef, organic eggs and veggies. Bring a dish to share at the group potluck dinner following the tour. Register by calling Thom Pecoraro at (413) 329-1400 or emailing [thom@wyofarm.com](mailto:thom@wyofarm.com).

### Spelunking at Bentley's Cavern, Berlin

Saturday, August 13 • 9:00 a.m.

Never been spelunking? Here is your opportunity to see inside a local cave with expert guides. The event begins with a 1/2 mile hike up to Bentley's Cavern, then a short drop into the entrance cavern, followed by a brief crawl through water to get to an inner chamber. Bring a LED headlamp, bicycle helmet, a light jacket and a complete change of clothes for entering the cave. Joint event with Northeastern Cave Conservancy and the Helderberg Hudson Grotto. To register, contact Rebecca Krakowiak (716) 939-8910 or [krakowir@gmail.com](mailto:krakowir@gmail.com).

### Mushroom Walk at Kinderhook Creek Nature Preserve

Saturday, August 27 • 10:00 a.m.—Noon

Sue Van Hook, local mycologist, will lead us into the woods at our Kinderhook Creek Nature Preserve in East Nassau. Participants will have a chance to develop their field skills in mushroom identification. Bring a basket or bag with stiff sides, a field knife or trowel, and a hand lens if you have one. Registration fee \$10/person. To register, contact Marcy Steinberg at [marcygs@aol.com](mailto:marcygs@aol.com), (518) 674-2171, or register online at [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org).



Volunteer Bob Crowley at 1st Water Chestnut Pull

## SAVE THE DATES!

More details online at [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org)

**September TBA**—7th Annual Rensselaer Plateau Traverse

**October 1**—Hike to Berlin Mountain

**October 8**—9th Annual Oktoberfest Benefit

**October 9**—Mohawk Hudson River Marathon  
Volunteer road marshals needed

**October 15**—Fall Foliage Hike to the Dickinson Fire Tower

**November 12**—Wreath Making Workshop

**November 13**—Annual Meeting & Keynote Speaker Jeff Olson Presenting: "The Transformative Impact of Trails and Greenspace on Communities"

• **Founded in 1987** •

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Rensselaer Land Trust is to conserve the open spaces, watersheds and natural habitats of Rensselaer County, for the benefit of our communities and future generations.

## **Board of Directors**

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