

# SPRING 2011 Newsletter

## 2010 Annual Report

**T**his cold and snowy winter hasn't slowed down the Rensselaer Land Trust. We are proud to announce that in the last three months, we have successfully completed two land conservation projects: acquisition of the Robert Ingalls Preserve in Stephentown, and closing on a donated conservation easement on a property in Schodack. (See articles in this newsletter for more details.)

Rensselaer County has a diverse set of landscapes, including the forests and wetlands of the Rensselaer Plateau, the steep Taconic Mountains, farms and pastures, areas with a mix of residential development and open land, and heavily developed urban centers and suburbs. Our two recent projects showcase RLT's status as the only organization that works to preserve open space in all parts of the County.

### From the President

NICK CONRAD

The Schodack property, called "Shad-bush Hill" by the owners, contains fields, woods, and wetlands. The owners have donated the development rights to the property to RLT. This land is close to East Greenbush, in an area currently characterized by a mixture of homes and rural lands, but also in the part of Rensselaer County facing the strongest development pressure. Open space here needs to be protected now, before it is lost for good.

On the other side of the County, our new Robert Ingalls Preserve in Stephentown protects a native trout stream and a portion of the Rensselaer Plateau's expansive unfragmented forests. These forests maintain water quality in the streams flowing from the Plateau; provide habitat for moose, bear, coyote, bobcat, fisher, hawks, and many songbirds; and support recreational and economic activities.

The Rensselaer Plateau was designated a Forest Legacy Area by the U.S. Forest Service in December. The Forest Legacy Program provides grants to keep environmentally sensitive forest lands from being converted to development and other nonforest uses. Designation makes federal funding available for the purchase of conservation easements on the Plateau from willing landowners who develop a natural resource stewardship plan for their property. The program is totally voluntary on the part of the landowner. RLT will be working with the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance and other partners during the coming year in educating the Plateau's landowners about land protection options and in identifying potential easement opportunities.

**RLT is committed to preserving the character of Rensselaer County not just for the benefit of people living in rural areas, but for the benefit of the whole County.**

The Robert Ingalls Preserve is open to the public for hiking, snowshoeing, and fishing. We will be laying out trails, installing a kiosk, and putting up nature interpretive signs. We hope to make the Preserve a destination for

environmental education for both the local community and for visitors and youth groups from throughout the County. Rensselaer Land Trust is committed to preserving the character of Rensselaer County not just for the benefit

of people living in rural areas, but for the benefit of the whole County. At the Robert Ingalls Preserve, city residents can enjoy and learn about the outdoors in ways not readily available at home. In the future, we hope to engage in projects in or close to the County's urban centers.

2011 promises to bring more land conservation successes in Rensselaer County, and I invite you to be part of our efforts. Whether you make a financial donation, volunteer your time and skills, or attend an RLT event or outing, your contributions help us tremendously, and together we will conserve the places that make Rensselaer County special.



BILL NIEMI

# Looking Back with Gratitude



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nick Conrad, President  
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Paul Schroeder

## VOLUNTEER EVENTS COORDINATOR

Jessica Stephenson

## VOLUNTEER MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Jonathan Duda

I am writing this in January when one tends to reflect on the past year and I know it will be March by the time you read this. Forgive me for being reflective when spring is almost upon us and “looking forward” is one’s mindset at this time. We are moving forward minus some people who will be sorely missed. Bob Ingalls lost his battle with myeloma last November. He was our most recent Vice President and also chaired our Stewardship Committee. He was also a very active member of the Outings Committee and led many outings, especially those involving plants. He was a member of the Acquisitions Committee. He was involved in fundraising in addition to being a major donor himself. He was our webmaster as well as our postmaster, sending appropriate emails to the person best able to handle that particular inquiry. He was involved in many of our early baseline studies, a very time-consuming process that is required before an easement is executed. He was at every Tomhannock Cleanup that we conducted, even last year manning the registration table, when he was undergoing chemotherapy. He had a PhD in psychology and a MS in Computer Science and was Executive Director of RPI Computer



Science Department. Most of us at RLT depended upon his knowledge of plants when visiting new properties.

Most of all, he was an exemplary person; he never complained, was never negative, never criticized anyone, and was truly humble (made you feel like he was always learning something from you).

Others that we will miss at our meetings include some that have left the board in recent years for personal reasons. These include Roger Armstrong, John Munn, Jim Garrahan, John Heimke, and Doree Cox. They promise to continue as active members and we are thankful for their past contributions and look forward to their continued involvement.



Special thanks to Nate Simms for photographs on cover and pages 2-3, 4-5, 8-9 and 10-11.

Publication of this newsletter is funded in part by the Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Inc.

Designed by Brian Murray.

## RLT Protects Shadbush Hill with Conservation Easement

On February 9, we closed on a donated conservation easement on 30 acres in Schodack. The property is called Shadbush Hill by its owners, Gerald E. and Shirley W. Dunn. It contains fields, an old orchard, woodlands, a pond, the Balekill Stream, a wetlands area and a

storage shed. Our easement protects the property from development and keeps it agriculturally viable and productive. It protects the forest, ecosystems, wildlife and wildlife habitats. It also protects the water quality of the Balekill Stream, the pond and surrounding wetlands that are part of the watershed for the Muitzeskill Creek, which flows into the Hudson River. The easement fosters landscape-scale conservation and reduces land fragmentation.



# RLT Acquires the Robert Ingalls Preserve

Last spring, at the opening of trout season, member, volunteer and avid fisherman Steve Pentak noticed a wooded property with a beautiful brook trout stream flowing through it. It was marred only by a small area where someone had dumped tires, batteries and washing machines. Steve looked up the owner in the tax records and contacted her with an offer to put together a work group to clean up the dump area. The owner, Mrs. Goldberg, lives in New York City. She was worried about someone getting hurt while cleaning up the ravine and so declined Steve's offer. Steve began talking to her about RLT and the possibility of donating the property. After months of negotiations, Mrs. Goldberg donated her 30 acres of forested land to RLT last November. Costs associated with closing and cleanup are

being donated by members of RLT. We have named the preserve after Robert Ingalls, RLT Vice-President and long-time board member, who passed away in November.

The Robert Ingalls Preserve, located at the intersection of Garfield and Horse Heaven Roads, will be open to the public, after the boundaries are surveyed and marked, for fishing, hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and birding. Several work days are planned in 2011 to improve the parking area, install a kiosk (can you help build one?), lay out trails, erect educational interpretive signs, and clean up the dump area. We hope you can help us prepare and maintain the property by joining us on our work days and/or contributing to our stewardship/legal defense fund.

## Snowshoe Hike at the Robert Ingalls Nature Preserve

RLT's snowshoe hike on Saturday February 12, 2011 at the Robert Ingalls Nature Preserve in Stephentown was a big success. Fifty-seven people participated, including many that had never snowshoed before. Thanks to Ben Brinker, who identified otter tracks in the snow for us. Other wildlife tracks included full body imprints in the snow from an animal that sank in so deeply it was forced to leap. It is thought that these tracks might have come from a bobcat. We hiked two different loops along the Black Brook and up through a mildly hilly forest. If you are interested in joining a committee to help RLT prepare this preserve for the public please contact Christine at 518-859-4363 or at Christine@renstrust.org.





# 2010 Highlights

2010 was a successful and busy year. Our Acquisitions Committee visited 12 properties throughout Rensselaer County. We acquired one of these properties, placed an easement on another and are currently working to apply conservation easements to two more. We hope to complete these easements early this year. Action on four other properties is on hold pending adequate funding of the stewardship/legal defense endowment necessary for us to uphold our mission to protect land in perpetuity.

In 2010, our Stewardship/Monitoring Committee monitored 15 properties. Four of these are owned outright by RLT and the remaining 11 are under conservation easements. With the recent acquisition of the Robert Ingalls Preserve and the new Shadbush Hill Easement, RLT proudly protects 17 properties totaling 773 acres.

## Outings

This past year, our Outings Committee hosted 10 educational and recreational outings: a snowshoe hike, a spelunking experience, a wildflower hike, a Hudson River history walk, a picnic at an old mill site, a canoe/kayak paddle, a Taconic Crest hike, a birding walk, a historic cemetery hike, and a dairy farm tour. We also had work days where we planted over 300 trees at our Hoosic River property, picked up over 100 bags of garbage along the Tomhannock Reservoir, and cleaned and raised tombstones at a historic cemetery. Our special events included the Hoosic River Community Boating and Fishing Day, Oktoberfest, a historic charcoal making demonstration, a free public concert at the Troy Victorian Stroll by volunteer steward and

renowned fiddler George Wilson, and our annual meeting. RLT staff and members also made three speaking appearances at community educational events, lobbied our state legislators for the protection of our county's natural resources and farmlands, and participated in wildlife monitoring programs.



## Casting Competition Winner

This summer, at our Hoosic River Community Boating and Fishing Day, we hosted a fly casting competition. Competitors cast into hula

hoops set out at 3 distances. The grand prize winner was 9-year old Lauren, who competed with the adults. Lauren has been interested in fishing since she was three years old, and only this year started practicing fly casting at her local school playground with her father's fly rod. RLT is very pleased to have awarded her the grand prize, her own Orvis Streamline Fly Fishing Rod Outfit.

## Volunteers

Thanks to our Volunteer Coordinator Paul Schroeder, we have been successful in involving the local community and young adults in our work. For example, the Tamarac Middle School chapter of the National Junior Honor Society helped us plant over 300 trees. At the Tomhannock Clean-up, students from Tamarac High School, University at Albany, and RPI spent the day picking up garbage. The UAlbany Sorority Phi Delta Kappa volunteered at our Oktoberfest. All in all, 210 people volunteered their

time this past year in various ways to help us make Rensselaer County a better place to live and work. Thank you!

## New Membership Database

RLT has a new database that allows us to keep better track of member information, and to save paper, postage and fuel by offering you the option of receiving our newsletters via e-mail. Our new system also enables us to send out last minute reminders and timely updates. Please make sure we have your e-mail so we can keep you up-to-date with outings and action alerts.

## New Board Members and Volunteers

**Jennifer Hixon, Board Member, Co-Chair Fundraising Committee.**

Jenny Hixon grew up on the Rensselaer Plateau but left for college (Bryn Mawr), graduate school (Yale) and work (corporate and nonprofit IT). She moved back to the area in 2007 when her husband took a job at SUNY Albany. Jenny rejoices to be able to share with her husband and sons the landscapes she loved as a child, and to help the Rensselaer Land Trust in its mission to preserve them.



**Allan Stern, Board Member.**

Allan Stern has lived in Troy since 2008, having previously



# Volunteer Opportunities

resided in Boston and Chicago. He attended Williams College, where he was a classmate of Bob Ingalls. He served in the Peace Corps in West Africa, then taught in public schools in inner-city Chicago and later trained teachers in applying computer technology to classroom teaching. Now retired, he retains an interest in academic life. His wife Susan Scrimshaw is president of the Sage Colleges; Allan is involved in many college activities. Ask him about the latest Photoshop technique from the class he's taking, or the last choral piece he performed with the Sage College Singers. Other interests include cross-country skiing, kayaking, and exploring new roads on his Ducati motorcycle. The RLT is a natural fit for his many interests.

## **Sally Lawrence, Board Member.**

Sally Lawrence has been in higher education for the past 42 years. She served as a dean and a vice president of academic affairs for 25 years at Sage before retiring in June 2010. Previous to Sage, she served in teaching and administrative positions at SUNY Albany, Union College, and Schenectady Community College. Sally grew up in a horse family on Long Island and loves animals and nature. She supports numerous animal protection and conservation organizations and does a lot of hiking, camping, and canoeing. She lives with her husband in Averill Park. Sally looks forward to working with the Rensselaer Land Trust.



## **Jessica Stephenson, Volunteer Events Coordinator.**

Jessica became interested in environmental affairs as a child growing up in Lansingburgh on the Hudson River. She received her BA from SUNY Albany and her

MA from Rosemont College near Philadelphia. Jessica has experience with nonprofit organizations that specialize in fields ranging from applied mathematics to veterinary technology. She is currently the director of communications for a nonprofit management company in Albany, responsible for graphic design, promotions and marketing, as well as event planning. Jessica lives in Troy, enjoying hiking, yoga, painting, graphic design and gardening in her spare time. She is excited to be working with the Rensselaer Land Trust as Volunteer Event Coordinator.

## **Jonathan Duda, Volunteer Media and Government Relations Coordinator.**

Recently returned to the Capital Region, Jonathan spent the last decade in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains as the Marketing Manager and Outdoor Educator at the Ashokan Center. As the former VP of Communications for the NYS Outdoor Education Association and grant reviewer for the Catskill Watershed Corporation, Jonathan continues his involvement in the nonprofit world as an independent consultant and volunteer.



Sharing her "beloved Rensselaer County and opening its treasures to people who are not aware of what the County has to offer" keeps Doree Cox volunteering on our Outings Committee.

We were delighted with our new volunteers in 2010 and invite and encourage you to express your love of the land by volunteering for RLT this year. Volunteer activities this spring include the Tomhannock Reservoir Clean-Up on April 23rd and the Hoosic River Tree Planting on May 7th. Oktoberfest requires lots of help and is lots of fun. These and other opportunities will be posted on our website.

If you are interested in volunteering for a specific activity, have a skill to share, or just want to find out how you can help, the first step is to contact Paul Schroeder, our Volunteer Coordinator, at 674-2480 or pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com. You are part of our organization and we are only as strong as our members.



# Hikes & Paddles

**2011 CALENDAR**

Each year RLT sponsors a series of hikes and programs that give participants the opportunity to experience firsthand the natural beauty and history of Rensselaer County.

RLT programs range from indoor presentations to leisurely strolls to more strenuous hikes with a variety of terrain and difficulty levels. Please choose outings based on you and your party's physical ability and comfort. We make every effort to accurately describe the difficulty level of each outing, but it is still a subjective description. We recommend that you dress appropriately for all weather and trail conditions, and wear long pants and hiking boots or sturdy walking shoes. Always carry adequate water and food. If you have specific questions or concerns, please contact the listed trip leader or RLT.

## Volunteers Welcome!

Do you know of a scenic or natural spot in Rensselaer County that would make a good location for a hike? Are you interested in helping to plan and lead a hike or other outing? RLT's Outings Committee welcomes all of your ideas for future hikes and outings, and we welcome volunteers to help us plan and lead them.

In addition to our own outings and events, other local environmental and recreational organizations offer many activities and programs that highlight the great outdoors of Rensselaer County, the Capital Region, and New York State. For links to the websites of these organizations, go to the RLT website, [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org), and in the main menu click on "Web Resources."

Watch our website, [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org), for the latest news on these outings and on new outings added to the schedule. Also watch for details about our dedication this summer of the Robert Ingalls Preserve.

### Solar House Tour

**Saturday, April 2 • 10:30 am – 12:00 pm**

The owner will lead a tour of his Brunswick home, which he has made fully solar. Learn about solar energy residential systems, including equipment, benefits, costs, and the relationship with the power company. Ask an energy expert your questions.

Tour is limited to 12 people. Please register in advance by calling Christine Young at 859-4363 or via e-mail at [christine@renstrust.org](mailto:christine@renstrust.org).

### Spring Wildflowers at Rensselaer Tech Park

**Saturday, May 14 • 9:00 am**

May is the month for spring wildflowers to bloom, and the woods, fields, and ravines behind the Rensselaer Technology Park provide good habitat. Tom Phillips, well-versed botanist, will help us find and identify the area's wide variety of spring flowers. We will walk about three to four miles along the Tech Park's trails, with moderate ascents and descents, and some muddy spots.

Meet at the Rensselaer Technology Park Office (the old DeFreest House) on Jordan Road in North Greenbush just off Route 4. Take Route 4 to the traffic light one mile south of Route 136/Hudson Valley CC, or 1.5 miles north of Route 43. Enter the Tech Park and take the first left. No reservations necessary.

### Common Farms and Barberville Falls

**Saturday, June 11 • 10:00 am**

The scenic woods of Common Farms have been permanently protected by their owners through a conservation easement held by RLT. Join us on a hike through the Common Farms and to the adjacent Barberville Falls Preserve, owned by The Nature Conservancy, where the 90-foot falls are always spectacular. The hike will be about 4 miles, and will include some hills and some wet and rocky spots. Bring a lunch and water.

Please register in advance by contacting Nick Conrad at 279-1963 or [nbconrad@msn.com](mailto:nbconrad@msn.com). Meet at the end of Hinkle Road in Poestenkill: From the blinking red lights at the junction of Routes 351 and 355 in the center of Poestenkill, go about ½ mile north on Route 351 to a right turn onto Hinkle. Or, from the junction of Routes 351 and 2 in Cropseyville, go about 4 miles south on Route 351 to a left on Hinkle Road. Once on Hinkle Road, go to the end and park along the edge of the cul-de-sac.



### Hoosic River Paddle

**Saturday, July 9 • 9:00 am**

Bring your kayak or canoe and join us as we paddle 8 miles of the Hoosic River. We'll put in at the new NYSDEC public boat launch on RLT's Hoosic River property in Eagle Bridge, and take out downstream just before the Johnsonville Dam. This attractive stretch of the Hoosic is all flat water, resembling a long lake, and features coves and marshy backwaters with bird and other animal life. The banks are mostly forested, with some farms and few houses. Please provide your own boat and PFD, and bring snacks and water. Novice paddlers can join but you need to be in good enough physical condition to negotiate about 1/4 mile of dense water chestnut growth at the take-out.

Please register in advance by calling Paul Schroeder at 674-2480 or [pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com).

The Hoosic River boat launch is approximately 1 mile west of Eagle Bridge on the north side of Route 67, at the DEC sign.

## Rensselaer Plateau Traverse

Saturday, September 10 and Sunday, September 11

Get up close and personal with New York's fifth largest forest region by hiking it from one end to the other. The Rensselaer Plateau stretches almost the whole length of Rensselaer County from north to south. The second annual Rensselaer Plateau Traverse will take place over two days, with the option of overnighting at Pine Ridge Cross Country Ski Center. Attendees may hike either one day or both days. This will be a strenuous two days—each day's hike will be about 15 miles. Watch for more information at the RLT website or at the Rensselaer Plateau website, [www.renselaerplateau.org](http://www.renselaerplateau.org). Sponsored by the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance, Friends of the Dyken Pond Center, and RLT.

## Up and Down the Hollows to the Taconic Crest Trail

Saturday, October 1 • 9:00 am

We'll hike the central portion of the Taconic Crest Trail, going steeply up either Southeast Hollow/ Berlin State Forest, or up Robinson Hollow. Then we'll hike along the narrow Taconic Crest for about 3 miles, and descend via Mattison Hollow and its scenic waterfalls.

This will be a strenuous hike, 7 to 8 miles depending on the route taken, with long steep uphill and downhill sections. Wear boots or sturdy shoes. Bring lunch, snacks and plenty of water, and be prepared for cool and windy conditions.

Register in advance by contacting Nick Conrad at 279-1963 or [nbconrad@msn.com](mailto:nbconrad@msn.com).

## Historic Barns of Nipmosee

Sunday, October 2 • 2:00 pm

The three historic barns of Nipmosee reflect the extraordinary craftsmanship of 18th and 19th century timber framers. These barns have been restored at Nipmosee Farm in Buskirk in northern Rensselaer County. The Scottish Barn, built in the 1700's, ranks among the country's earliest and most unique barns; its timbers were hewn and split by hand. The German Barn and Corn Crib date from the 1800's. Standing on this windswept property, you can almost feel the strength of early settlers to our area who handcrafted these buildings. Connie Kheel, who supervised the restoration of these barns for the Persistence Foundation, will give us a tour and insight into their history and unique architectural features. Join us to see historical preservation in the making.

Directions to the site are at [www.nipmoseebarns.org/location](http://www.nipmoseebarns.org/location). For further information, call Doree Cox 658-2643 or Francille Egbert 674-3214.



## Watch for more information on these events later in the year:

### Oktoberfest Fundraiser at Brown's Brew Pub in Troy

Early October

### RLT Annual Meeting

Late November or Early December

### RLT Open House during Troy Victorian Stroll

Sunday, December 4

## Volunteer Days

### Tomhannock Reservoir Clean-up Volunteer Day

Saturday, April 30 • 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

In observance of Earth Day, join us for our fourth annual clean-up of the shores of Tomhannock Reservoir, source of drinking water for over 100,000 residents of Troy and other Rensselaer County communities. Meet at the NYSDEC public access parking lot along NYS Route 7 in Raymertown, just before the causeway over the reservoir. Groups will collect trash along a half-mile stretch of the shore. Garbage bags will be provided; bring gloves. We will work regardless of weather, so dress appropriately. Sponsored by RLT, the City of Troy, and Stewarts. To register, contact Paul Schroeder, Volunteer Coordinator, at 674-2480 or [pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com).

### Tree Planting at Hoosic River Boat Launch Volunteer Day

Saturday, May 7 • 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Join us for a tree-planting party! NYSDEC constructed a public boat launch last year at RLT's property on the Hoosic River in Eagle Bridge. The site needs more landscaping, and NYSDEC is providing seedlings to be planted. Bring gloves, a shovel and bucket if you can, and a snack and drink. We will work regardless of weather, so dress appropriately. The boat launch is approximately 1 mile west of Eagle Bridge on the north side of Route 67, at the DEC sign. To register, contact Paul Schroeder, Volunteer Coordinator, at 674-2480 or [pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:pschroeder1@nycap.rr.com).

### Robert Ingalls Preserve Work Day

Date and time to be announced

Join us for a work day at our newest nature preserve in Stephentown. We will be improving a parking area, cleaning up debris, building a kiosk, putting in and marking trails, erecting educational interpretive signs, building stepping stone bridges, and marking the preserve boundaries. Donated materials for the parking area, kiosk and signs are greatly appreciated. Contact Christine to volunteer at 859-4363 or via e-mail at [christine@renstrust.org](mailto:christine@renstrust.org).

### Historic Cemetery Restoration Work Day

Saturday, June 25

Join RLT in restoring a historic Baptist Cemetery with graves that predate the mid-19th Century. The property is owned by Alice LeBlanc, who has granted the RLT a conservation easement on it. We will be excavating, resetting and cleaning tombstones. Bring lunch and something to drink. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Alice at 917-441-1333 or [aliceleblanc@verizon.net](mailto:aliceleblanc@verizon.net) or Dan Lorber at 914-575-1965 or [denver@taconic.net](mailto:denver@taconic.net).



## Ensure RLT's Future

Help ensure the future of the Rensselaer Land Trust and the lands we protect with a gift that fulfills your personal tax and giving objectives! Contact our Executive Director Christine Young, Esq. for information on:

- Income tax benefits of gifts of real estate
- How traditional IRA rollover into a Roth can offset income tax
- The language that is acceptable in making a bequest
- Types of in-kind gifts that can have an impact
- How to make monthly pledge payments
- How to honor the memory of a loved one with a gift
- How to make a gift of appreciated stock and get more income for life
- How to give assets to my family and income from those assets to RLT

## RLT Wish List

- Paper shredder
- LCD projector for computer
- Hand-held GPS
- Camera with integrated GPS

Thank you, Alex Nardacci, for granting our wishes last year. Your gifts of stamps and chairs have been enormously helpful.

# RLT Members Offer Stalwart Support

RLT has been honored by your continued support throughout this lean economic period. It seems that as local resources become more threatened, more people are making it a priority to protect land and water in Rensselaer County. We experienced a significant increase in volunteer participation, from cleaning watersheds and helping with events to working on our fundraising endeavors. We also received more requests for easements to protect open space. And our overall donations were up. We value every contribution we have received this past year because as our protected acreage grows, so does our financial responsibility.

I now share my job as Fund Development Chair with a new volunteer and Board Member, Jenny Hixon. We work on the

nitty gritty, from data entry, to mailing appeals, to taking out the garbage. She comes with lots of IT and editing skills and a heart which values the land her sons will enjoy.

We are working with corporations who share our commitment to conservation. We are also exploring grant opportunities with local foundations to fund a study to identify high priority areas for conservation in Rensselaer County. But our main and consistent support, essential to our work, is YOU! You, who stand with us through the good and bad times and who encourage new friends to support RLT. When you hear from us by letter or e-mail in 2011, as we tell you of our work and needs this year, remember how valued you are. Thank you.



Grand opening of the Hoosic River public boat launch.



Clean up at Revolutionary War-era cemetery in Stephentown.



# Local Win in Preserving Forest Land

The International Year of the Forests was launched by the United Nations in February 2011, and on the local level Rensselaer County has much to celebrate. In 2010 the Rensselaer Plateau was designated a Forest Legacy Area. Covering almost one third of Rensselaer County the plateau contains 105,000 acres, much of which is contiguous forests.

From the DEC announcement: "A Forest Legacy Area designation ... recognize[s] the Rensselaer Plateau as an area with unique resource values, such as scenic, recreational, cultural and ecological values, as well as riparian areas, fish and wildlife habitats, threatened and endangered species and the potential for sustainable forest management and forest-based recreation. Conservation

activities in this area would not only serve to secure these significant features, but would also contribute to establishing an open space corridor across the Plateau connecting previously conserved landscapes. The FLP is designed to encourage the conservation of privately owned forest lands utilizing an entirely voluntary program. To maximize the public benefits it achieves, the program focuses on the conservation of partial interests in privately owned forest lands. It encourages and supports acquisition of conservation easements, without removing the property from private ownership."

Watch our web site [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org) for dates of public workshops about this program.

## The Rensselaer Plateau Alliance Moves into High Gear

The Rensselaer Plateau Alliance has recently received a grant to coordinate the development of a regional conservation plan. Key elements of the project are: (1) collect and map ecological data and community values of the Rensselaer Plateau, (2) create opportunities for communication and collaboration within and between municipalities, landowners and stakeholders about this resource and its conservation and economic importance, (3) work with local governments, landowners and NY state to assist conservation awareness, (4) understand together the value of planning in order to ensure that the characteristics of the Rensselaer Plateau that we know and love and

need remain, and (5) identify and develop the tools and additional information that municipalities might need in order to get there.

From the results of the focus groups, municipal and stakeholder meetings, and from the ecological data and community value data collected, the planning toolbox will continue to be developed and a draft Conservation Plan will be assembled as valuable resources that municipalities can use. The Rensselaer Land Trust will be collaborating with the Plateau Alliance as they work with local towns and residents.





# Financial Data

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2010

# Gifts

2010

## INCOME

<b>Corporate &amp; Foundation Grants</b> (received in 2010)	<b>\$ 3,000.00</b>
<b>Fundraising Grant</b> (received in Dec. 2009, applied to 2010 income)	<b>22,500.00</b>
<b>Fundraising Event Revenues</b>	
Merchandise Sales	96.30
Special Events	570.37
Non-program Sales	12,870.50
<b>Total Fundraising Revenues</b>	<b>13,537.17</b>
<b>Interest Income</b>	<b>269.44</b>
<b>Member Contributions</b>	
Staffing Grant Match	2,300.00
Cash Contributions (Other)	34,067.83
<b>Total Member Contributions</b>	<b>36,367.83</b>
<b>Stewardship Endowments</b>	<b>1,500.00</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 77,174.44</b>

## EXPENSES

<b>Fundraising Event Costs</b>		
Equipment Rental	1,805.00	
Fundraising expense	1,675.00	
Merchandise Costs	538.06	
Fundraising Event Costs (Other)	5,904.96	
<b>Total Fundraising Event Costs</b>	<b>9,923.02</b>	
<b>Conferences &amp; Meetings</b>	<b>475.00</b>	
<b>Insurance</b>	<b>1,603.16</b>	
<b>Membership Dues</b>	<b>1,552.00</b>	
<b>Mileage Reimbursement</b>	<b>772.70</b>	
<b>Office Expenses</b>		
Bank Service Charges	50.21	
Postage & Delivery	1,030.78	
Printing & Publications	7,708.32	
Office Expense (Other)	524.85	
<b>Total Office Expenses</b>	<b>9,314.16</b>	
<b>Officer &amp; Director Salaries</b>	<b>27,500.04</b>	
<b>Payroll Taxes</b>		
NYS Disability	-31.20	
Social Security & Medicare	2,103.75	
Unemployment Tax	207.32	
Workers' Comp Insurance	1,116.88	
<b>Total Payroll Taxes</b>	<b>3,396.75</b>	
<b>Professional Fees</b>	<b>16,880.00</b>	
<b>Property Taxes</b>	<b>80.36</b>	
<b>Rent &amp; Utilities</b>	<b>3,326.25</b>	
<b>Repair &amp; Maintenance</b>	<b>150.59</b>	
<b>Telecommunications</b>	<b>479.53</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 75,453.56</b>	
<b>NET OPERATING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 1,720.88</b>	

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The Rensselaer Land Trust (RLT) is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization with the mission of preserving the land and protecting the natural resources of Rensselaer County. The organization was founded in 1987 and incorporated in 1988. The RLT is managed by an all-volunteer board of directors. Its primary funding stream is memberships and donations. The organization uses strategies such as conservation easements, stewardship, and public education to achieve its mission. The organization has permanently protected over 700 acres of open space through conservation easements and title acquisition.



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Troy NY 12180

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**Reduce waste and bring on  
a new member – pass this  
newsletter along!**

## Join the Rensselaer Land Trust!

The support of our members allowed us to steward over 700 acres of protected land in 2010, with the goal of protecting 1,200 acres by 2012.

Your support of Rensselaer Land Trust localizes your impact in a world of environmental concerns. The forests and wetlands we protect help filter rainwater and clean the air we breathe, and provide habitat for wild-life and unique plants. We look forward to receiving your membership renewal and connecting you with local environmental issues throughout the year. As a member, you will receive our biannual newsletter, e-mail updates, and invitations to all of our outings and upcoming events. Join or renew your membership on our website at [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org) or using the enclosed envelope. Together we will have a lasting, positive impact on our environment here in Rensselaer County.

