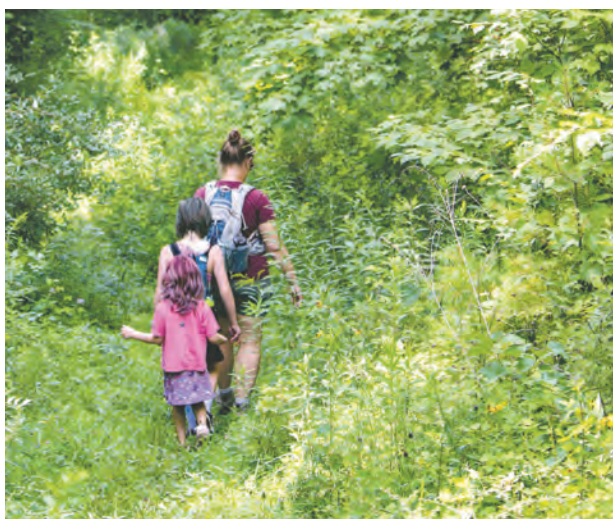


# Towns & Villages

*A Comprehensive Guide to Your Communities and Their Services* May 2021



## CONNECTICUT

Canaan/Falls Village,  
Cornwall, Kent,  
Norfolk, North Canaan,  
Salisbury, Sharon

## NEW YORK

Amenia,  
Millbrook/Washington,  
Millerton/North East,  
Pine Plains



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# Towns & Villages

May 20, 2021

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# The land we love, the rivers we cherish, the farms that feed us, the land trusts that protect it all

BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

In a normal year, we might be saying, “Spring is here, time to get back outdoors and start hiking again!” But the COVID-19 pandemic changed so many things — and for many people, what changed was that “winter hiking” became a daily activity, whether on cross-country skis or snowshoes or spikes or Yak Trax.

The year-long quarantine (and still counting) was an intensifier in so many ways, and one thing it did for many people was force them outdoors and help them realize what extraordinary resources are available here: the hiking trails, the rivers and lakes, the birds, the newts, the bears, the bicycling.

As the writer Blake Levitt once said, “Litchfield County doesn’t look the way it does by accident.” The same applies of course to Dutchess County (and Berkshire County in Massachusetts). The wild, untouched appearance of this part of the world is not a result of benign neglect. It has taken nearly a century of hard work on the part of many people to allow nature to grow back in a safe and beautiful way, after the industrial era of the 1800s — when,

famously, all the trees in this region were cut down to feed the iron furnaces that turned the skies orange night and day.

It’s hard to imagine that this area was akin to the great steel cities of Pennsylvania, and yet this region had some of the nation’s first and largest foundries. The evidence can be found deep in the woods, where trees and vines have grown over the old charcoal pits and where stone walls and old lilac trees offer hints to where the homes of iron workers were a century ago. History is as important a part of conservation as is the natural landscape.

And it is the area land trusts and historical societies that preserve the beauty around us and the reminders of our past.

These nonprofit organizations work hard to make all of that available to any of us who care to partake. Nearly all of the thousands of acres of protected land in this part of the world benefit the public. There are hiking trails, there are history trails, there is boating access. Many of the preserved properties have farms on them, and most sell their produce and products at farm stands or at area markets.

In this special issue, our intention is

to both pay tribute to the hardworking volunteers of the land trusts in our region, and to encourage our readers to go to the websites of these organizations and find out what they have to offer. Most have maps of their trails. Nearly all of them organize birdwalks or moonlight hikes or history presentations. All are designed to help teach us about the world around us, and about why it’s worth saving.

Below is a list of websites for the land trusts and organizations featured in this issue. Each page in this issue is dedicated to one town, with a full list of important phone numbers and people/places to know — in addition to information on that town’s conservation organization.

Thank you for reading our Towns and Villages special issue; and thank you for supporting the local land trusts.

### Cornwall Conservation Trust

West Cornwall, Conn., 860-248-3255,  
www.cornwallconservationtrust.org

### Dutchess Land Conservancy

Millbrook, N.Y., 845-677-3002,  
www.dutchessland.org

### Housatonic Valley Association

Cornwall Bridge, Conn., 860-672-6678;  
Stockbridge, Mass., 413-298-7024;  
and Wassauc, N.Y., 845-442-1039,  
www.hvatoday.org

### Kent Land Trust

Kent, Conn., 860-488-9185,  
www.kentlandtrust.org

### Land Trust Alliance

Washington, D.C., 202-638-4725,  
www.landtrustalliance.org

### Norfolk Land Trust

Norfolk, Conn., 860-307-8380,  
www.norfolklandtrust.org

### Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

Kent, Conn., 860-927-1927,  
www.ctland.org

### Salisbury Association Land Trust

Salisbury, Conn., 860-435-0566,  
www.salisburyassociation.org/land-trust

### Sharon Land Trust

Sharon, Conn., 860-364-5137,  
www.sharonlandtrust.org

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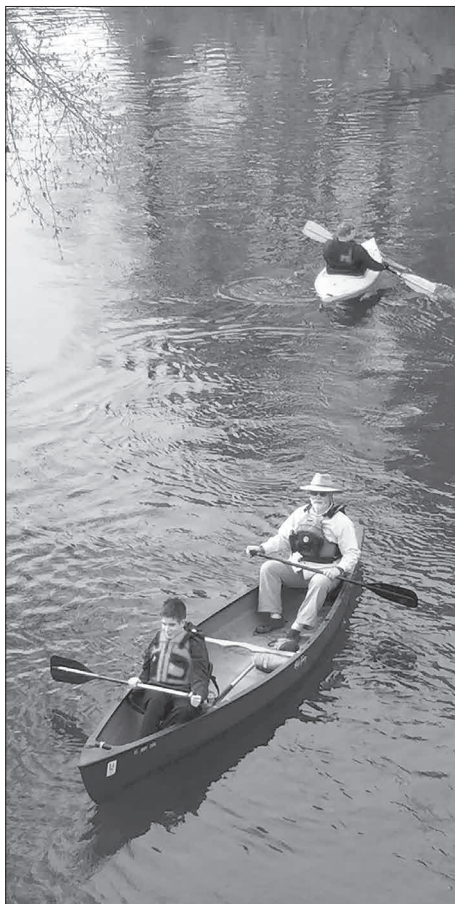


Photo by Tim Abbott, Housatonic Valley Association

The Housatonic River,  
Source to Sound Paddle

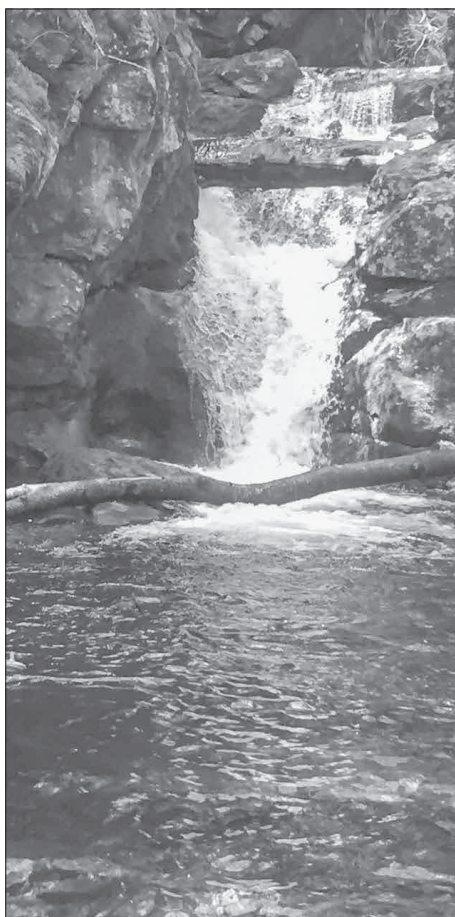


Photo by Tim Abbott, Housatonic Valley Association

A waterfall in Sages Ravine in Salisbury.  
The land is protected by CT DEEP.

# Understanding land trusts, conservation easements — and what we lose when we don't have them

BY DEBRA A. ALEKSINAS

Throughout northwest Connecticut and neighboring Dutchess County in New York lies a vibrant network of conserved acreage, including miles of maintained trails open to visitors seeking respite from the stresses of everyday life.

These undeveloped parcels — from fields and farms to forests and wetlands — aren't here by accident. Generous landowners sought to protect these lands into the future, through partnerships with conservation organizations that are designed to protect not just beauty and views but also an area's history, drinking water and ecological integrity.

The region between the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers has millions of acres of connected forests that are among the most resilient and diverse wildlife habitats in North America, recognized with numerous federal and state designations, including the Highlands Conservation Act, which has been the single greatest source of federal conservation funding in Northwest Connecticut for much of the last decade.

Land is considered permanently protected if it is owned by a conservation organization or agency, or if it is subject to a conservation easement. Much as the land under protection is unique, no two conservation easements are alike.

## Conservation easements

These legally binding

contracts are entered into voluntarily between a landowner and an organization such as a land trust that agrees to uphold its terms and conditions. Landowners choose to place conditions on future use of their property for many reasons, including to restrict development, protect wildlife habitat, water quality, open space, agricultural land or the natural character of the area.

All conservation easements share a common goal: to safeguard land in its natural state, and, in some cases, to revert developed properties back into green spaces.

They may also be tax deductible, in recognition of the public benefits they provide and the loss of real value to property owners in terms of extinguished development rights.

In our region, more than half the conservation holdings of local and regional land trusts are conservation easements.

## A benefit to communities

A conservation easement is created as a deed and recorded in the land records.

After it is placed on a property, each successive generation of new owners must adhere to its terms.

A land trust is entrusted with safeguarding the land in perpetuity while adhering to federal and state requirements. After donating or selling an easement, landowners may continue to

enjoy their property as long as they adhere to the restrictions placed upon it.

They also pay taxes, which is helpful especially to the small rural towns in this area, which often choose to limit development and, as a result, have limited income from property taxes.

Among humans, it's not just hikers, bikers and paddlers who reap conservation's benefits.

Forests, parks, green spaces and trails also have a direct link to a community's economic vitality. Home values rise and commerce blossoms, two more reasons to support a local land trust's conservation efforts.

These protected lands, according to Catherine Rawson, executive director of the Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC), benefit communities in the Tri-state region and create a lasting legacy for future generations.

"When our lands, waters and wildlife are healthy and thrive, so do our communities. The warming climate and pandemic have shown us that protecting our lands close to home, the lands we love, is more important than ever."

## What is a land trust?

Land trusts are nonprofit, community-based organizations dedicated to the stewardship and permanent protection of land for public benefit.

These groups, supported through charitable donations, work closely with landowners

to conserve land through acquisition and conservation easements. If a property has been purchased, the land trust assumes responsibility for its perpetual care and management. If the trust holds an easement, its responsibility is to make sure the easement is upheld.

According to Tim Abbott, Regional Land Protection Director for the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA), more than 137 conservation organizations serve the communities of Connecticut, representing the third most land trusts of any state in the country. These groups run the spectrum from small, all-volunteer outfits to large organizations with professional staff — like NCLC, which has seven full-time and one part-time staff member.

Every land trust in The Lakeville Journal Co.'s coverage area has been accredited by the Land Trust Alliance, said Abbott, and a number have also achieved accreditation renewal. Those include the Cornwall Conservation Trust, Norfolk Land Trust, Sharon Land Trust, Kent Land Trust and the Salisbury Association Land Trust in Connecticut.

In Dutchess County, multiple towns are under the protection of the Dutchess Land Conservancy.

Accredited land trusts now steward almost 20 million acres across the United States; that would be a land mass the size of Connecticut, Massachusetts,

New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont combined, according to Rawson.

### **Stronger through collaboration, mergers**

As new challenges and opportunities arise, there has been a movement toward mergers and other types of formal partnerships among land trusts. As they have professionalized, growing from all-volunteer organizations to those that invest in staff and consultants to ensure that they meet or exceed Land Trust Standards and Practices established by the Land Trust Alliance, they have also had to scale up their operation capacities.

By joining forces through regional conservation partnerships like the HVA's Litchfield Greenprint Collaborative, land trusts in our region are pooling their resources and expertise. Not every organization needs to hire a professional Geographic Information System (GIS) planner or administrator if those services are available through partner land trusts. Three land trusts in northwest Connecticut, according to Abbott, actually share an HVA staff member who provides dedicated administrative and operational support.

Abbott, a well-known environmentalist, has been a quiet, yet effective organizer for decades, of many of the region's most significant and complex conservation deals. Thanks to support from the Litchfield Hills Greenprint, said Abbott, this region of Connecticut outperforms the rest of the state in terms of the quality of the land protection projects that are submitted by local land trusts each year for competitive funding through Connecticut's Open Space Watershed and Land

Acquisition (OSWA) grant program.

Last year, eight out of the top 10-ranked projects were from northwest Connecticut. Many of these projects will leverage matching funding from the federal Highlands Conservation Act, which is now up for renewal by Congress.

Connecticut Sen. Chris Murphy (D) has introduced a bill that would not only extend the term of the Highlands Conservation Act but also provide a means to expand eligibility and double the amount of funding available.

According to Abbott, since 2007 more than 21 Highlands projects have been completed in our region, and there are near 20 more in progress.

Shelley Harms, a land trust consultant and vice president of the Norfolk Land Trust, said that while challenges remain, she is excited about the future. Reflecting on emerging trends, Harms cited a focus on climate change, accreditation and land acquisitions through donations.

"Little land trusts don't have a lot of money, so they're not going to buy everything. As a result," she said, "they are identifying contiguous parcels and environmentally rich properties. They are starting to prioritize more."

### **Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy**

In June 2020, a merger between Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust (in Kent), Connecticut's largest land trust — serving all of Litchfield and northern Fairfield Counties — and Naromi Land Trust (Sherman) created the Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy. The new name was selected to more clearly reflect its regional scope.

Weantinoge and Naromi had worked in tandem

for several years and were in a strong financial and governance positions. In a statement at the time of the merger, Rawson called the partnership a "momentous" and exciting time for Weantinoge, which was founded in 1965. As of this year, NCLC protects 12,500 acres across northwest Connecticut, including 21 public nature preserves and 30 working farms, said Rawson.

In February, NCLC reported the protection of

five new properties in in Salisbury, Cornwall, Roxbury and New Milford. These lands include climate-resilient areas, habitat for rare species, drinking water resources and working farmland. NCLC works closely with Litchfield County communities by assisting the work of local land trusts and regional partners through funding and technical assistance for acquisitions and stewardship, as well as providing shared staff.

While many Connecticut

communities have a dedicated land trust, and others are merging or considering mergers, there are some small towns, North Canaan, for example, which relies on the neighboring Norfolk Land Trust or regional/state land trusts for conservation assistance.

### **Local stewardship has its merits**

In certain instances, a regional or national land

**"The warming climate and pandemic have showed us that protecting our lands close to home, the lands we love, is more important than ever."**

— Catherine Rawson, Executive Director, Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

*Continued on page 28*



The Housatonic River between Sharon and Cornwall

*Photo by Wendy Carlson, Housatonic Valley Association*

## KEY SERVICES

Animal Control	845-242-2069
Assessor (Mon. & Tues., 9-3)	845-373-8118 ext.103
Building Inspector	845-373-8118 ext.118
Highway Superintendent (Mon.-Fri., 7-3:30)	845-373-9922
Parks and Recreation	845-373-8860
Tax Collector (Mon.-Thurs., 9-1)	845-373-8118 ext. 125
Town Clerk (Mon.-Thurs., 9-3)	845-373-8860 ext. 125
Town Justices	
Judge James Devine	845-373-8434
Judge Norman Moore	845-373-7017
<i>Due to COVID-19, all litigants call 845-737-7017 with updated contact information so appearances may be rescheduled.</i>	
Town Supervisor (Mon.-Thurs., 8-4)	845-373-8118 ext.111
Water District	845-789-1307

## OTHER SERVICES

Amenia Free Library	845-373-8273
Amenia Historical Society	www.ameniahs.org
Department of Motor Vehicles	
Millbrook (Mon., Wed. & Fri., 9-4:45)	845-677-4080
Pawling (Tues. & Thurs., 9-4:45)	845-855-4400
Poughkeepsie (Mon.-Fri., 9-4:45)	845-486-2130

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

For emergencies	911
Amenia Fire Company	845-373-8467
Amenia Constable	845-373-8434
Dutchess County Sheriff	845-486-3800
State Police	
Dover	845-877-3031
Wassaic Fire Company	845-373-8807
Hudson River Health Care, Amenia	845-838-7038
Sharon Hospital, Sharon, Conn.	860-364-4000

## SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Columbia-Greene Community College	518-828-4181
Marist College	845-575-3000
Dutchess Community College	845-431-8000
Webutuck Elementary School	845-373-4100 ext. 1
Eugene Brooks	845-373-4100 ext. 2
Intermediate	845-373-4100 ext. 3
Webutuck High School	845-373-4100 ext. 3
Webutuck School District	
Administrative Offices	845-373-4100

# A family farm, handed from father to sons

BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

The beautiful Town of Amenia in Dutchess County is characterized by six distinct and historic hamlets (Amenia, Amenia Union, Sharon Station, Smithfield, South Amenia and Wassaic), and bifurcated by the Harlem Valley Rail Trail, which stretches from the Metro-North railroad Wassaic station northward to the town boundary with North East.

Amenia is home to the Silo Ridge development, which began life as a golf course and is now a growing, upscale golf-based housing community. Wassaic is well-known for the popular Wassaic Project arts community.

Like most towns in this part of Dutchess County, it is the Dutchess Land Conservancy that protects the views, vistas, farms, fields and forests that make this town a special place to visit and live in.

All land protected by the DLC has significant natural value. In Amenia, the DLC has protected 5,600 acres of land with both donated and purchased conservation easements.

An important recent conservation project is the protection of three key farms that form the gateway between the New York-Connecticut border and the hamlet of Amenia — a group of properties on Route 343 owned by the Meili family.

The Meili lands include 330 acres that the family protected with the DLC in late 2019. Hans Joerg Meili immigrated to the U.S. from Switzerland, and had a lifelong career in agriculture here in the U.S.

Hans Joerg raised his family on what is now “Meili Farm,” located on both sides of the New York-Connecticut border. All four of his children (Barbara, Joerg, Carla and Craig) share their late father’s commitment to farming and land conservation (Hans Joerg died in December 2020). They fully supported and participated in preserving all of the farmland they own in Amenia, and will continue to own, farm and steward the lands their father protected.

All three properties are located in the northern foothills of Rattlesnake



Photo courtesy of Dutchess Land Conservancy

Before he died in December 2020, Hans Joerg Meili ensured that the family farmlands would be cared for by his sons, Craig at left in the photo, and Joerg, at right.

Mountain and the town’s Scenic Protection Overlay District. It is easy to see how important they are collectively they encompass a mile and a half of frontage on Route 343 between the New York and Connecticut border, and two of the farms are visible from the Harlem Valley Rail Trail. The protection of these farms fulfills values in Amenia’s Comprehensive Plan, which

calls agriculture “the single most important and easily lost feature that distinguishes Amenia’s landscape as a rural community.”

The 94-acre Meili Farm is farmed by Hans Joerg’s son, Craig, who raises free-range pork, beef and chicken. The development rights for this parcel were purchased with assistance from Dutchess County, the Housatonic

Continued on page 16

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Maplebrook School	845-373-8191
Millbrook School	845-677-8261

## RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Congregation Beth David	845-373-8264
Immaculate Conception Church	845-373-8193
Smithfield Presbyterian Church	www.thesmithfieldchurch.org; 845-789-1357

## SOUTH AMENIA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

South Amenia Presbyterian Church	845-373-9959
St. Thomas Episcopal Church	845-373-9161

## ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Town Supervisor	
Victoria Perotti	845-373-8118 ext.111
County Legislator	
Deirdre Houston (25th District)	845-797-9639

## STATE ASSEMBLYWOMAN

Didi Barrett (106th District)	845-454-1703
State Senator	
Sue Serino (41st District)	845-229-0106
Representative in U.S. Congress	
Antonio Delgado (19th District)	202-225-5614
United States Senators	
Kirsten Gillibrand	202-224-4451
Charles Schumer	202-224-6542
Governor	
Andrew M. Cuomo	518-474-8390

## KEY SERVICES

### VILLAGE OF MILLBROOK

Building & Zoning (Mon., 5-7)	845-240-2118
Public Works Garage (Mon.-Fri., 6 to 2:30)	845-677-3022
Village Clerk (Mon.-Fri., 9-3)	845-677-3939
Mayor	845-677-3939

### TOWN OF WASHINGTON

Animal Control	845-489-6148
Assessor's Office	845-677-3949
Building & Zoning (Mon.-Fri., 11-3)	845-677-3419
Highway Garage (Mon.-Fri., 7:30 to 3:30)	845-677-3910
Recreation	845-677-3419
Tax Collector (Mon.-Fri., 9-12:30, 1-3)	845-677-3419
Town Clerk	845-677-3419
Town Justice	845-677-3419
Town Supervisor	845-677-3419

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

For emergencies	911
Millbrook Firehouse	845-677-3871
Millbrook Police	845-677-8200
Dutchess County Sheriff	845-486-3800
State Police	
Troop K, Millbrook	845-677-7300
Hudson River Health Care, Amenia	845-838-7038
Sharon Hospital, Sharon, Conn.	860-364-4000

## OTHER SERVICES

Millbrook Library	845-677-3611
Department of Motor Vehicles	
Millbrook (Mon., Wed. & Fri., 9-4:45)	845-677-4080
Pawling (Tues. & Thurs., 9-4:45)	845-855-4400
Poughkeepsie (Mon.-Fri., 9-4:45)	845-486-2130
Millbrook Historical Society	www.millbrookhistoricalsociety.org

## RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Grace Episcopal Church	845-677-3064
Lyall Memorial Federated Church	845-677-3485
St. Joseph's Church	845-677-3422
St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Lithgow	845-677-9286
Verbank Methodist Church	845-677-5534

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Alden Place Elementary	845-677-4220
Columbia-Greene Community College	518-828-4181

# Preserving not just the land but also the life-giving water that lies beneath

BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

When we hear the name "Millbrook" in Dutchess County, N.Y., we tend to think of the world-famous center for high-end equestrian activity, with sprawling farms-and-fields handed down from generation to generation.

In that sense, Millbrook isn't just the village of Millbrook; it encompasses the nearby villages of Stanfordville and Pine Plains, which are considered part of Millbrook because of their horse-centric lifestyle.

Contributing to the Brigadoon-ian sense that Millbrook is as much a concept as it is a place: Millbrook is not actually a town; it's a village that is part of the town of Washington, N.Y.

But from a conservation point of view, what's interesting about Millbrook isn't the horses. It's the water.

That shouldn't be enormously surprising to anyone who's driven through

Horse Country here. Part of what makes these properties feel so lush is that nearly all of them have a large pond and wetland.

But there is also quite a bit of water in this part of Dutchess County that you don't see as you drive by, including many streams feeding the Wappinger Creek watershed (a tributary of the Hudson River); and the Ten Mile River watershed (a tributary of the Housatonic River), which mainly flows through Connecticut and Massachusetts, but which contributes to water health in Dutchess County as well.

Millbrook happens to be within the divide of two watersheds flowing both east and west.

So when we talk about conservation in Millbrook, we aren't just talking about conserving views and vistas and forest and hiking trails. We are, to a large degree, talking about protecting water.



Photo courtesy of Dutchess Land Conservancy

Protection by the Dutchess Land Conservancy helped Walbridge Farm remain a working farm, producing foods that are sold on the farm itself and at many area markets.

### The land does not conserve itself

It might be tempting to assume that much of the land in Millbrook and Washington protects itself, as the landowners here often own large tracts of land — and don't often subdivide them.

While that might be partly true, it's more work than one might think to own and manage land.

The community has a

strong sense of ownership of the land, in part thanks to the equestrian groups that host events such as the Millbrook Horse Trials and Fitch's Corners Horse Trials.

But even with landowners and the community caring for the land, here as in other nearby Dutchess County towns, the protection and stewardship of land and

Continued on page 16

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Dutchess Day School	845-677-5014
Millbrook School	845-677-8261

## ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Millbrook Mayor	
Tim Collopy	845-677-3939
Washington Town Supervisor	
Gary Ciferri	845-677-3419
County Legislator	
Deirdre Houston (25th District)	845-797-9639
State Assemblyman	
Kieran Michael Lalor (105th District)	845-221-2202

State Senator	
Sue Serino (41st District)	845-229-0106
Representative in U.S. Congress	
Antonio Delgado (19th District)	202-225-5614
United States Senators	
Kirsten Gillibrand	202-224-4451
Charles Schumer	202-224-6542
Governor	
Andrew M. Cuomo	518-474-8390

# A Bank for the Next Generation

To George Whalen IV, relationships are what build community, and lending is a tool that helps people make things happen. He's seen it his whole life, the Bank of Millbrook working together with people like you, in this area that's thrived from his great grandfather's generation to his son's.



George T. Whalen IV  
*Vice President, Lending*

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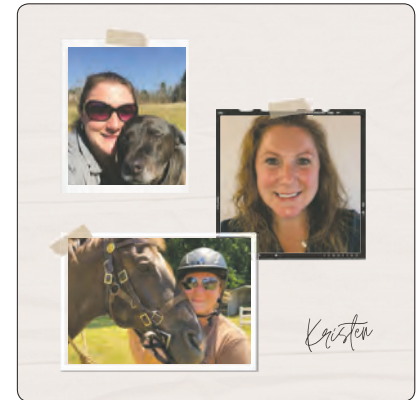
**CAROLYN CANNON**  
DVM, Practice Owner



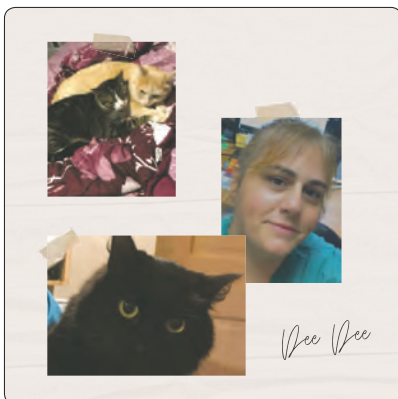
**JENNIFER JONES**  
DVM, Associate Veterinarian



**MARISA SIMMONS**  
CVPM, Practice Manager



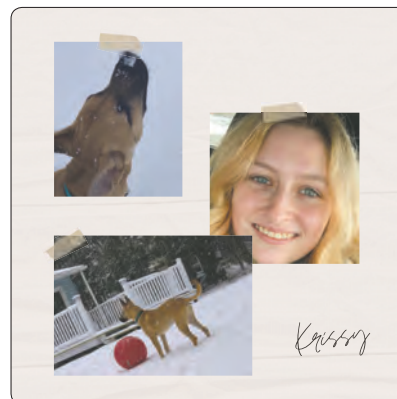
**KRISTEN SALMON**  
LVT, Licensed  
Veterinary Technician



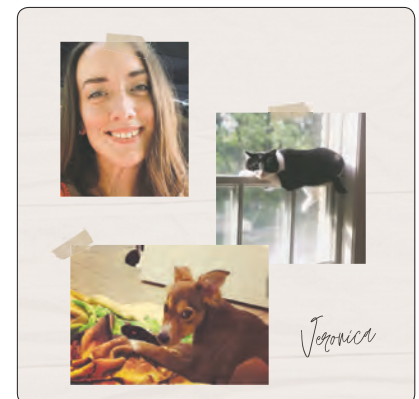
**DEE DEE ST. JOHN**  
Front Desk Coordinator



**SHARON STRAMM**  
Receptionist



**KRISSY FARNHAM**  
LVT Candidate, Veterinary  
Technician Assistant



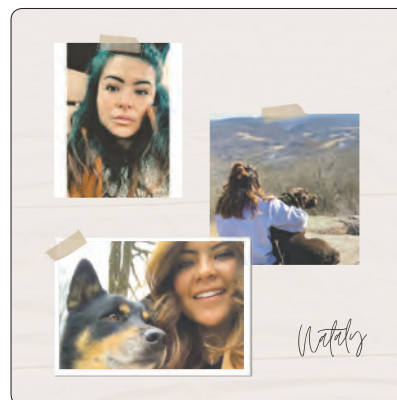
**VERONICA WILCOX**  
Veterinary Technician  
Assistant



**CHERYL PAULSEN**  
Receptionist



**JESSICA DEISTER**  
LVT, Licensed  
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Photo by Janet Manko



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**West Cornwall 860-672-2626**

**Kent 860-927-4646**

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Animal Control	860-927-4783
Assessor (Mon. & Wed., 9-noon & 1-4)	860-927-3160
Building Department (Mon.-Fri., 9-4)	860-927-4556
First Selectman (Mon.-Fri., 9-noon & 1-4)	860-927-4627
Fire Marshal (Tues. & Thurs., 3-4)	860-927-4556
Land Use (Mon.-Fri., 9-4)	860-927-4625
Litchfield Hills Probate District #24	www.litchfieldprobate.org
Park & Recreation (Mon.-Fri., 9:30-noon & 1-2:30)	860-927-1003
Probate Court (Tues., 9-11)	860-927-3729
Public Works (Mon.-Fri., 7:30-3:30)	860-927-3491, 860-927-4627
Registrars of Voters (Mon., 1-4)	860-927-1953
Resident Trooper	860-953-9949
Social Services/Municipal Agent (Mon., 10-1, Tues.-Fri., 9-4)	860-927-1586
Tax Collector (Mon., Tues., Wed., 9-noon & 1-4)	860-927-3269
Town Clerk (Mon.-Thurs., 9-4, Fri., 9-noon)	860-927-3433
Transfer Station (Sat. & Sun., 8-3:30)	860-927-4627
Treasurer (Tues. & Wed., 1-4, Fri., 9-noon & 1-4)	860-927-0109

### PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

For emergencies	911
Kent Volunteer Fire Department and Ambulance	860-927-3151
State Police Troop L, Litchfield	800-953-9949
Sanitarian (Torrington Area Health District)	860-489-0436 or www.tahtd.org
Sharon Hospital	860-364-4000

### OTHER SERVICES

Kent Chamber of Commerce	860-592-0061
Kent Community House	860-927-4627
Kent Education Center & Nursery School	860-927-1294
Kent Historical Society	860-927-4587
	www.kenthistoricalsociety.org
Kent Memorial Library	860-927-3761

### PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Explorations Charter School, Winsted	860-738-9070
Housatonic Valley Regional High School, Falls Village	860-824-5123
Kent Center School	860-927-3537
Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Winsted	860-738-6300

# Not just protecting the landscape but also using it and loving it

BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Of all the land trusts in the area, one that interacts most closely with the community is the Kent Land Trust. In addition to an extensive list of properties protected in the past decades, this land trust also works hard to make sure that properties can be used and appreciated by the public.

Part of this partnership includes trails for hiking, from the gentle, quarter-mile Claire Murphy Riverwalk along the Housatonic River (just behind the Land Trust's Marble Valley Farm), to the four easy-to-moderate trails in the East Kent Hamlet Nature Preserve (formerly home to the Camp Francis Girl Scout summer retreat), to the two challenging trails at the Currie Sanctuary.

Descriptions of these and many other hikes can be found on the Land Trust website (www.kentlandtrust.org/KLT-Places), with lovely maps hand-drawn by architect John Milnes Baker and engaging descriptions by Wendy Murphy, who serves on the Land Trust's Board of

Directors.

Hiking and birdwatching can be wonderfully solitary activities but they don't need to be: The Land Trust organizes outings throughout the year, making it possible for novices to get expert assistance in finding and learning a variety of trails without trepidation, while also offering a chance to socialize (so welcome in the quarantine year) for hikers of all ages and experience levels. A recent offering welcomed the Kent Memorial Library's "Lunch Bunch" to the Claire Murphy Riverwalk, where a popular Storywalk created by local Eagle Scout Aiden Cherniske complements opportunities to observe wildlife, waterfowl and farming near the Housatonic River. In early June, the Land Trust will present "Muffins and Martins" at the Skiff Mountain South Preserve in collaboration with the Marvelwood School.

The Land Trust provides a community garden near the center of town. And on a larger scale, the Land



Photo by Amanda Branson

A bench, carefully sited to feature the magnificent west-looking view from the Currie Sanctuary, was built and installed as part of an Eagle Scout project by Ashton Smith.

Trust owns and leases Marble Valley Farm, run for years now by well-known farmer Megan Haney. Delicious edibles grown on the 14-acre property off Route 7 near Bull's Bridge can be purchased during the season; many of those same delectable veggies are featured each week at Kent restaurants. For those who'd like to grow their own, there are seedlings available each year during the final two weekends in May.

In the most authentic community spirit, the Land

Trust engages its members in helping to care for Kent's land and people, with events such as trail clearing days as well as a new call to help provide for those experiencing food insecurity in northwest Connecticut.

In the last decade, 10% of Litchfield County's population was consistently designated as food insecure. Since 2019, owing to COVID, that percentage has jumped 38.4% with an estimated 25,000 Litchfield

Continued on page 26

Oliver Wolcott Technical School, Torrington  
860-496-5300

### PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Kent School	860-927-6000
Marvelwood School	860-927-0047
South Kent School	860-927-3539

### RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

First Congregational Church	860-927-3335
Sacred Heart Church, Catholic	860-927-3003

St. Andrew's Church, Episcopal  
860-927-3486

Temple Shalom, New Milford  
860-354-0273

### ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

First Selectman	
Jean Speck	860-927-4627
Representatives in Connecticut General Assembly	
Sen. Craig Miner (30th District)	800-842-1421

Rep. Maria Horn (64th District)  
800-842-8267

Representative in Congress (5th District)  
Jahana Hayes Waterbury 860-223-8412  
Washington 202-225-4476

United States Senators  
Richard Blumenthal Hartford 860-258-6940  
Washington 202-224-2823  
Chris Murphy Hartford 860-549-8463  
Washington 202-224-4041  
Governor  
Ned Lamont 800-406-1527

### KEY SERVICES

#### TOWN OF NORTH EAST

Assessor (Wed. & Thurs. 9-12:30 & 1-3)	518-789-3300 ext. 605
Building Inspection Office (Tues., 2-7, Wed., 9-3, & Fri., 9-12:30, 1-3)	518-789-3300 ext. 606
Dog Control	518-789-4504
Highway Department	518-789-4850
Town Court (Mon.-Thurs., 9-2, & Fri., 9-noon)	518-789-3300 ext. 604
Planning Board (Mon.-Fri., 9-3)	518-789-3300 ext. 608
Supervisor	518-789-3300 ext. 608
Town Clerk (Mon.-Thurs., 9-12:30, 1-3, & Fri., 9-12:30)	518-789-3300 ext. 603
Zoning Board of Appeals (Tues. & Thurs., 1-5)	518-789-3300 ext. 607

#### VILLAGE OF MILLERTON

Building Inspector and Zoning Enforcement Officer (Tues. 2-7, Wed. & Fri. 9-3)	518-789-3300
Village Clerk (Mon.-Thurs., 9-4, Fri., 9-noon)	518-789-4489
Village Mayor	518-789-4489
Water/Highway Department	518-789-4756

### PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY

For emergencies	911
Dutchess County Sheriff	518-789-3115
State Police Troop K	518-789-4411
Village Police	518-789-6355
Hudson River Health Care, <i>Amenia</i>	845-838-7038
Sharon Hospital, <i>Sharon, Conn.</i>	860-364-4000
Millerton Fire Co. & Rescue Squad Firehouse	518-789-4645

### OTHER SERVICES

American Legion Post 178	518-789-4755
Department of Motor Vehicles Millbrook (Mon., Wed. & Fri., 9-4:45)	845-677-4080
Pawling (Tues. & Thurs., 9-4:45)	845-855-4400
Poughkeepsie (Mon.-Fri., 9-4:45)	845-486-2130
North East Historical Society	www.nemillertonlibrary.org/historical-society
NorthEast-Millerton Library	518-789-3340
North East Community Center	518-789-4259
Nutrition Site (Mon.-Thurs., 10-2)	518-789-3081

### SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Columbia-Greene Community College	518-828-4181
Marist College	845-575-3000

# Protecting farms, food, our rural way of life

BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

The town that many of us think of as “Millerton” is actually a village within the town of North East. Most of the time, it doesn’t really matter if we use the wrong name, but when it comes to land conservation, it is useful to note that Millerton is largely the retail center of North East; and the open spaces, the farmland and forest that contribute so much to the rural beauty and old-fashioned charm of this part of Dutchess County are the lands that surround Millerton, which are really North East.

Like most towns in this part of Dutchess County, the nonprofit organization that protects views, vistas, farms, fields and forests is the Dutchess Land Conservancy.

All land protected in the towns by the DLC has significant natural value. North East specifically offers scenic views, a diversity of plant and animal species, thousands of acres of intact forest land, vast networks of wetlands, working farms and the steep slopes that lead up

from the Boston Corners section of town to the Mount Riga plateau.

Conservation projects rely on the cooperation between the DLC and landowners. Two important ones that the DLC protected in recent years are both agricultural properties.

One is a farm located in Northeast’s Coleman Station Historical District, which begins near the salt shed just off Route 22 and travels back “inland,” with fields, forests and farms surrounding Hiddenhurst, and its acres of fields, exquisite views and magnificent neo-Georgian columned mansion.

This New York State-designated Historical District is about 2,000 acres in size; of that, 525 acres (25%) is protected by the DLC.

One of the DLC-protected properties is the 158-acre Duncandale Farm, which was protected in 2017 with a conservation easement that helps ensure the land will continue to be used for agriculture. Duncandale has



Photo courtesy of Dutchess Land Conservancy

Donald Duncan, in this photo taken in 2015, out haying on Duncandale Farm in the Coleman Station Historic District.

been farmed since the 1700s and has been specifically a dairy farm since the 1900s.

Nearly a century after switching to dairy, in the 1990s, milk prices dropped, causing many dairy farms to shut down. Farmer/owner Donald Duncan found other full-time work but was determined to protect the farm for future generations.

Duncandale’s prominent, open and wooded hilltop is highly visible to travelers along Route 22, and from

McEnroe’s Farm Market, occupying the viewshed for approximately a mile and a half. Hikers along the Harlem Valley Rail Trail get to enjoy the special beauty of the farm’s open fields as the trail parallels Indian Lake Road.

The development rights were purchased from the Duncan family. Funds were provided by the DLC, Scenic Hudson, the New York Department of Agriculture

Continued on page 18

Dutchess Community College	845-431-8000
Eugene Brooks Intermediate	845-373-4100 ext. 2
Webutuck Elementary School	845-373-4100 ext. 1
Webutuck High School	845-373-4100 ext. 3
Webutuck School District Office	845-373-4100 ext. 5

### PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Maplebrook School	845-373-8191
Millbrook School	845-677-8261

### RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Congregation Beth David, <i>Amenia</i>	845-373-8264
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Faith Bible Chapel	518-789-6073
Immaculate Conception, <i>Amenia</i>	845-373-8193
Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses	518-789-6214
Millerton Methodist Church	518-789-4926
North East Baptist Church	518-789-4840
Pine Plains United Methodist Church	518-398-5521
First Presbyterian Church	518-789-3431

### ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

North East Supervisor	518-789-3300 ext. 608
Christopher Kennan	518-789-3300 ext. 608

Millerton Village Mayor	
Debra Middlebrook	518-789-4489
County Legislator	
A. Gregg Pulver (19th District)	914-474-0908
State Assemblywoman	
Didi Barrett (106th District)	845-454-1703
State Senator	
Sue Serino (41st District)	845-229-0106
Representative in U.S. Congress	
Antonio Delgado (19th District)	202-225-5614
United States Senators	
Kirsten Gillibrand	202-224-4451
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*Continued from page 6*

Valley Association and a foundation.

Arrowhead Hills Farm (82 acres) is farmed by Joerg and Craig together, who use the land to grow hay, corn and soy. The development rights were purchased with assistance from Dutchess County and the New York Department of Agriculture and Markets.

Destined Wind Farm (152 acres) is farmed by Joerg. The farm was operated as a dairy for 30 years; in 2018, Joerg transitioned out of dairy into hay and specialty crops. Destined Wind Farm is located within the “Amenia Fen Complex,”

a 2-square-mile high-priority area of hydrologically connected habitats supporting rare and endangered species. The development rights were purchased with assistance from Dutchess County and the New York Department of Agriculture and Markets.

Also in Amenia, the DLC is working to protect another 285 acres of farmland and special habitats on the northern side of Route 343 by summer of 2021, which, along with the three farms owned by the Meili family, will create a contiguous 614 acres of land in the gateway to Amenia and extend protection along the Harlem Valley Rail Trail.

# MILLBROOK/ WASHINGTON

## NEW YORK

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*Continued from page 7*

water are largely the work of the Dutchess Land Conservancy (DLC).

The DLC cares for nearly 10,000 acres of woodland and agricultural land and, according to Karin Roux, director of Land Projects for the DLC, a key component of this land is the water.

In Washington alone, the DLC cares for “3,100 acres of aquifer recharge area, protecting the quality of drinking water for local residents,” Roux said.

“Seventy-five percent of the communities in the Wappinger Creek watershed depend on groundwater as their source for drinking water.

“And many of the public water supply wells are hydrologically connected to the Wappinger Creek or one of its tributaries.”

There are 3,400 acres of federally protected wetlands here and 28 miles of stream frontage, many of them trout-spawning (helping to make this part of the world a destination for fly-fishermen).

### A history of conservation

Conservation and protection of the land isn’t new to Washington. This is a town where some of the properties have been under the protection of the DLC for decades. One such property is the Millbrook Vineyards and Winery, whose 133 acres have been protected by a conservation easement donated to the DLC back in 1988. This respected winery is on land that was for many years the Wing Dairy Farm. A new owner began growing grapes in 1982; the winery now produces 10,000 to 15,000 cases of

wine a year and is open to the public for tours and tastings.

The vineyard is almost entirely covered by high-quality farmland soils, with a pond and 8 acres of important federal wetlands that are part of the National Wetlands Inventory of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and it has a half mile of frontage on a tributary of the Wappinger Creek.

### Walbridge Farm

Another well-known property, conserved nearly two decades ago in 2002, is Walbridge Farm, famous for its grass-fed, farm-raised Black Angus meat, eggs, produce and more, sold at its onsite farm market in Millbrook and at local markets such as Big Rock Market in Stanfordville and The Market at Mabbettsville just outside the Village of Millbrook.

This sprawling property includes 550 acres that have been protected by a conservation easement donated to the DLC. A large portion of the farm (186 acres) includes fertile farm soils, and again, of great importance and something that we sometimes forget to recognize, the water.

Walbridge Farm has almost two miles of frontage on the Little Rest Brook (a tributary to the Wappinger Creek), and a majority of the property overlies Zone I and Zone II Aquifer Recharge Areas, protecting well water as well as 12 acres of important federal wetlands.

Some of the towns featured in this special issue — those with a great deal of water — also are popular spots for fishing and boating. But in this part of Dutchess County, the water is less about recreation and more about sustaining life, for farms, for animals, for wildlife and for humans.

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## KEY SERVICES

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Building Department (Wed. & Sat., 10-noon)	518-398-7110
Dog Control	518-398-7121
Highway Department (7-3:30 p.m.)	518-398-6662
After-hour emergencies	518-965-1876
Planning Department	518-398-7155 ext. 204
Recreation Director	518-567-7207
Supervisor	518-398-8600
Tax Collector	518-398-7155 ext. 211
Town Clerk (Mon.-Fri., 10-1)	518-398-7155
Town Justices (court clerk hours, Mon. & Wed., 10-2 and 3:30-6:30)	518-398-7194
Water Department	518-398-1411

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

For emergencies	911
Dutchess County Sheriff substation	518-398-5234
State Police	518-398-0317
Pine Plains Police	518-398-8601
Pine Plains Firehouse	518-398-1311
Hudson River Healthcare, Amenia	845-838-7038
Northern Dutchess Hospital, Rhinebeck	845-876-3001
Sharon Hospital, Sharon, Conn.	860-364-4000
VA Clinic, Pine Plains	518-398-9240

## OTHER SERVICES

Department of Motor Vehicles Millbrook (Mon., Wed., Fri., 9-4:45)	845-677-4080
Paulling (Tues. & Thurs., 9-4:45)	845-855-4400
Poughkeepsie (Mon.-Fri., 9-4:45)	845-486-2130
The Little Nine Partners Historical Society	www.lnphs.com; 914-474-1963
Pine Plains Free Library	518-398-1927

## SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Cold Spring Early Learning Center (Grades Pre-K-1), Stanfordville	845-868-7451
Columbia-Greene Community College	518-828-4181
Dutchess Community College	845-431-8000
Marist College	845-575-3000
Pine Plains Central School District	518-398-7181
Seymour Smith Intermediate Learning Center	518-398-3000
Stissing Mountain Middle/High School	518-398-7181

# Farms as providers of food and protectors of water, and views

BY KAITLIN LYLE

Consistent with its core mission to preserve the scenic, agricultural and environmental resources in Dutchess County, the Dutchess Land Conservancy (DLC) has worked with many of the county's farming families by helping to protect and preserve their land for future generations.

Since its founding in 1985, the DLC has protected more than 43,700 acres of land in both Dutchess and Columbia Counties, over 4,300 of which is located in the Town of Pine Plains — including Jordan Lane Farm and Schultz Hill Farm. Totaling around 153 acres, Jordan Lane Farm has been owned by the Jordan Family for almost 200 years and is now under the care of Betsy Speeter, an eighth-generation owner.

Given her family's history in relation to the farm, DLC President Becky Thornton said Speeter "has a real connection to the land, so she was really eager to protect the property and have it always remain open and available for farming."

Located three quarters of

a mile south of the village of Pine Plains, Thornton said Jordan Lane Farm serves as a piece of the southern gateway into the village. It connects with other DLC-protected lands in the area, creating continuous stretches of open space, forest, farmland and waterways.

Jordan Lane Farm also plays a part in protecting the town's drinking water supply: 25% of the property is part of the town's wellhead protection zone. The land overlies major aquifer recharge areas that help replenish groundwater supplies and contains a large wetland.

Jordan Lane Farm is visible from the Stissing Mountain fire tower; anyone planning to take a hike up to the fire tower in the near future only needs to look east to spot the farm.

The DLC was able to purchase the development rights for Jordan Lane Farm in November of 2020, with funding from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Water Quality Improvement Program and the Dutchess



Photo courtesy of Dutchess Land Conservancy

Identified as the original site of Ronnybrook Dairy, the Schultz Hill Farm property in Pine Plains was protected in 2016 with support from DLC, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and Scenic Hudson.

County Partnership for Manageable Growth Program and with assistance from the Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation. The end result is that Speeter still owns the land, still manages and cares for it (and pays the property taxes on it), and the property is protected with a DLC conservation easement that runs with the land in perpetuity, ensuring it will always remain open.

Retracing its work back to 2016, the DLC worked with the Osofsky family — best known as the owners of Ronnybrook Dairy — to protect Schultz Hill

Farm, the parent farm of Ronnybrook Dairy.

For 80 consecutive years, the Osofsky family has owned and operated Ronnybrook Dairy, which consists of five farms that "straddle the Pine Plains/Dutchess/Ancram/Columbia County border," according to Thornton. Schultz Hill Farm is the original site of Ronnybrook Dairy.

Approximately 90 acres of farmland are in use for hay, corn and soy, and approximately 25 heifers and cows are supported in the

Continued to page 23

## RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Church of the Regeneration, Episcopal	518-398-5628
First United Presbyterian Church of Pine Plains	518-398-7117
St. Anthony's Catholic Church	518-398-7115
Pine Plains United Methodist Church	518-398-5521

## ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Supervisor	
Darrah Cloud	518-398-8600
County Legislator	
A. Gregg Pulver (19th District)	914-474-0908
State Assemblywoman	
Didi Barrett (106th District)	845-454-1703

State Senator	
Sue Serino (41st District)	845-229-0106
Representative in U.S. Congress	
Antonio Delgado (19th District)	202-225-5614
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*Continued from page 14*

and Markets and Dutchess County.

Led by the DLC, the same team of nonprofit organizations and government entities also conserved another agricultural property in 2017: the 78.5-acre Caora Farm, whose entrance and farm building can be seen from what is known as the Sharon Road in North East. The farm is at the bottom of a steep slope that rises up to Indian Mountain.

The farm is owned by two women, Mich Ferraro (a veterinarian at Millbrook Equine) and Kathleen Weathers. The partners raise sheep on the farm, which they manage with the help of sheep dogs. Each year in summer, the farm hosts a three-day sheep dog trial (which is abundantly

fun to watch, and is open to the public).

If you'd like to find out if the sheep dog trials will be held in June in this still-quarantined year, check the Dutchess Land Conservancy website at [www.dutchessland.org](http://www.dutchessland.org).

The farm is also part of the scenic viewshed visible to hikers along the Harlem Valley Rail Trail.

As with all DLC-protected properties, the DLC assumes the perpetual responsibility to ensure the easement's provisions are followed. It has an active program to educate and develop good relationships with the landowners who own protected properties, to ensure they have a sound understanding of their responsibilities under the easement protecting their land.

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- Go on a guided bird walk at Schlesinger Bird Preserve.
- Marvel at the wonderful vistas of Tory Hill.



*Pope Preserve is close to town on Rt 44*

Visit [www.salisburyassociation.org](http://www.salisburyassociation.org) for more information and trail maps.

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ANNE DAY PHOTOGRAPHY

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.....	860-435-5177
Fire Marshal.....	860-435-5196
First Selectman (Mon.-Fri., 8:30-4)	
.....	860-435-5170
Litchfield Hills Probate District #24	
.....	www.litchfieldprobate.org
Recreation Director.....	860-435-5186
Registrars of Voters (Wed., 9-noon)	
.....	860-435-5175
Senior Services (Mon.-Thurs., 9-11 at Town Grove).....	860-435-5191
Social Services (Mon., Tues., Thurs, 9:30-4:30 p.m. and Wed., 9:30-3 p.m.).....	860-435-5187
Tax Collector (Mon., Wed. & Fri., 9-4)	
.....	860-435-5189
Town Clerk (Mon.-Fri., 9-12:30, 1:30-3:30)	
.....	860-435-5182
Town Grove Recreation Building	
.....	860-435-5185
Transfer Station (Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat., 8-4; Sun., 9-1).....	860-435-5178
Zoning Administrator (Mon.-Fri., 8-noon)	
.....	860-435-5190

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For emergencies.....	911
Salisbury Volunteer Ambulance.....	
860-435-0058 or www.salisburyambulance.org	
Lakeville Hose Co. ....	860-435-9981
Resident State Trooper .....	860-435-2938
State Police Troop B, North Canaan	
.....	860-626-1820
Sanitarian (Torrington Area Health District)	
.....	860-489-0436 or www.tahd.org
Sharon Hospital .....	860-364-4000

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Northwestern Connecticut Community	

# Community is at the heart of the SALT

BY DEBRA A. ALEKSINAS

Since acquiring its first conservation easement in 1973, and establishing a land trust under its umbrella three years later, the Salisbury Association (SA) has preserved 3,575 acres of land.

The Salisbury Association Land Trust (SALT), created in 1976 by long-time resident and conservationist Bill Morrill, is not resting on its laurels, however. SALT currently has its sights set on purchasing a 114-acre parcel adjacent to Lime Rock Park along the Appalachian Trail. Having already secured state, federal and private grant funding, the land trust needs to raise about \$130,000 to complete this new conservation effort.

“If we own it, we can allow public access,” said Shelley Harms, SALT’s part-time executive director. “The Dark Hollow trail is used a lot, as is the new trail at the Pope Preserve on Route 44,” east of the Lion’s Head condominium complex, she noted.

The town’s popular Rail

Trail path includes some of SALT’s protected land, and the organization cooperates with the town to monitor and maintain it.

To date, SALT owns 932 acres in 12 preserves and holds 49 conservation easements on 2,643 acres. Recent fee acquisitions include the Pope Preserve; the Yoakum Preserve on a 241-acre parcel situated on the southwest flank of Mount Riga, purchased with assistance from grants; Shostak, a 25-acre land donation off Route 7; and Sycamore Field Preserve, a 38-acre parcel also off Route 7. In addition, the land trust recently added to Sycamore with a 1-acre donation on its north side, according to Harms.

Among the most popular public access lands in Salisbury protected by SALT are the Schlesinger Bird Sanctuary — located on the south side of Scoville Ore Mine Road at Route 41, a few miles north of The White Hart inn — and the



Photo by Harry White

A drone photo captures two Salisbury preserved properties: the Mitchell Shostak preserve and, at right, Sycamore Field.

Appalachian Trail as it crosses Prospect Mountain. The Land Trust hosts bird walks and other programs at the Schlesinger Sanctuary.

Harms attributes SALT’s success to the dedication, knowledge of the area and expertise of those who manage, volunteer and support the organization’s preservation and conservation efforts.

“Salisbury Association Land Trust properties have a monitor or manager assigned to them,” Harms explained, “For instance, Tom Key keeps an eye on Dark Hollow and clears trails and leads hikes.

Easements are maintained and monitored to ensure they stay preserved.”

How SALT approaches preservation is a mix, said its executive director. “It’s great when landowners approach us, but when a property has significant conservation value, especially if it abuts lands we already preserve, we may initiate” contact, she explained.

Residents, too, keep a watchful eye over the protected lands in their community. “People know to call us if they see something,”

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Torrington.....	860-496-5300
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## PRIVATE SCHOOLS

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Congregational Church of Salisbury.....	860-435-2442
St. John’s, Episcopal.....	860-435-9290
St. Mary’s, Catholic.....	860-435-2659
Trinity Episcopal Church, Lime Rock	
.....	860-435-2627
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Rep. Maria Horn (64th District)	
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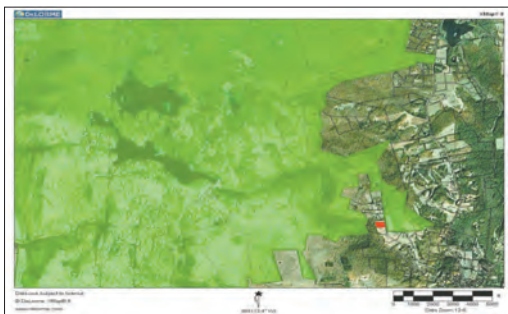
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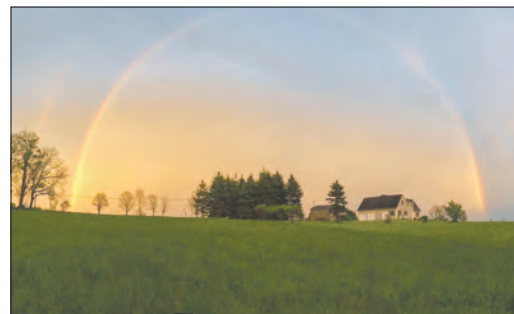
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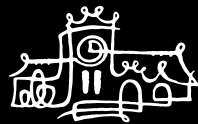
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*Continued from page 17*

pastures at any time, depending on whether they're maturing, pregnant or taking the annual two-month break from milking.

Located in the Roeliff-Jansen Kill watershed, the property contains frontage on a tributary to the Shekomeko Creek and overlies a Zone 1 Aquifer Recharge Area, which has a high value for protection since it's most vulnerable to contamination.

The Osofsky family sold the development rights to Schultz Hill Farm to the DLC to help the family complete an intergenerational transfer that would keep the farm intact and available for continued agricultural use. The family plans to continue

their dairy operations well into the future on their forever protected farm.

DLC Senior Land Projects Manager Erin Hoagland said the Schultz Hill Farm property was protected with funding from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and Scenic Hudson.

Reflecting on the significance of the DLC's work with local farms, Thornton said, "Farming is such an important component in our lives. Our region's farmers provide farm and food products and contribute to the local economy; they should also be recognized for the significant role they play as true stewards of so much of our open landscape, including so many of our scenic views."

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# SALISBURY CONNECTICUT

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*Continued from page 21*

said Harms.

Examples of land stewardship include work at Tory Hill on Route 41 near the Sharon border, to keep the vista open and to enhance wildlife habitat.

At the Railroad Ramble and Vincent preserves, SALT has replaced invasive plants with natives, and managing the Schlesinger Bird Sanctuary requires maintaining its special habitat to encourage a variety of bird life.

SALT's executive assistant is Lou Bucceri, and John Landon serves as its chair. The Salisbury Association, which employs three part-time staff members, has the added benefit of being housed in the Academy Building on Main Street in the village.

"Most land trusts don't have a visitor's space," explained Harms.

SALT hosts ongoing exhibits with nature themes at the Academy Building and sponsors lectures with environmental themes at the nearby Scoville Memorial Library.

The community-based Salisbury Association was founded in 1902 by James Harrison, Robert Scoville and Malcolm Rudd to preserve and improve Salisbury. Today it serves as an organizational "umbrella" for the town's land trust, as well as the town historical society and community event committees of the association. The organization is unique in New England, where many towns have separate dedicated organizations to provide these services.

SALT is always seeking volunteers and committee members. Email info@salisburyassociation.org or call 860-435-0566 for information.

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.....	860-672-2703
Building/Demolition Official (Mon., Wed. & Fri., 8-9 a.m. at Northwest Lumber & Hardware in Cornwall Bridge)	860-672-0711
Emergency Management Director	
.....	860-672-6547
Finance Officer (Mon. & Thur. 9-5, Tues. & Wed. 8:30-12:30)	860-672-2707
Fire Marshal	860-364-0909
First Selectman (Mon.-Thurs., 9-noon, 1-4)	
.....	860-672-4959
Land Use Office (Tues. & Thurs., 9-noon)	
.....	860-672-4957
Municipal Agent/Social Services (By appointment)	860-672-2603, 860-671-9315
Litchfield Hills Probate District #24	
.....	www.litchfieldprobate.org
Recreation Director	
.....	860-672-4071
Registrars	
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Social Services	860-671-9315
Tax Collector (Mon., 1-4, Wed., 9-noon & 1-4)	
.....	860-672-2705
Town Clerk (Mon.-Thurs., 9-noon & 1-4)	
.....	860-672-2709
Transfer Station (Tues., Thurs. & Sat., 9-4:30; Sun., 8-11 a.m.)	860-672-4079

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West Cornwall Firehouse	860-672-6526
State Police Troop B, North Canaan	
.....	860-626-1820
Sanitarian (Torrington Area Health District)	
.....	860-489-0436 or www.tahtd.org
Sharon Hospital	860-364-4000

### OTHER SERVICES

Cornwall Child Center	860-672-6989
Cornwall Historical Society	
.....	860-672-0505
.....	www.cornwallhistoricalsociety.org
Cornwall Library	860-672-6874

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Cornwall Consolidated School	
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Explorations Charter School, Winsted	
.....	860-738-9070
Housatonic Valley Regional High School, Falls Village	860-824-5123
Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Winsted	860-738-6300

# The greenest town works to protect and respect the land — and the community

BY LEILA HAWKEN

Whatever your vantage point, Cornwall is a treasure to behold. Peaceful hills, valleys and streams strewn with rocks, where all manner of creatures go about their business with some assurance that they are being well looked after. It's a longstanding promise made by Cornwall's residents to the old hills, forests and habitats in their care.

The Cornwall Conservation Trust (CCT) is one of the organizations whose mission it is to live up to the promise. It conserves forests and farmland and manages its holdings, implementing good forest management, ensuring water quality, wildlife protection, farming and recreation. Community members guide the philosophy. Public participation in realizing goals is essential.

Commenting on CCT's responsibilities, Bart Jones, president of the organization for the past nine years, said, "The challenge is to continue to conserve and protect our greatest natural resources, open space and forests,

while supporting economic strategies with the town that will allow for a variety of income levels, focusing on housing and tax revenue issues."

Conservation easements are another means of conserving property in addition to purchases. Easements can be tailored to an owner's particular conservation goals and can assist a town in keeping the property on the tax rolls. Conservation easements are not required to allow public access.

CCT is sensitive to the town's current Plan of Conservation and Development. The group's conservation aims recognize the need for constructive town growth and prosperity.

Of the many parcels protected through CCT's programs, Jones singled out two important acquisitions that can be considered representative of the history and long-term goals of the organization.

Cathedral Pines is a 42-acre parcel recently donated to CCT by The Nature



Photo by Barton Jones

Cathedral Pines, an iconic site in Cornwall, is now protected by the Cornwall Conservation Trust.

Conservancy. The forest is iconic, an old-growth white pine and hemlock forest that had been deeded to The Nature Conservancy in 1967 by the Calhoun family, whose ancestors had in turn protected it from logging in 1887.

The Mohawk Trail runs through it, offering generations of hikers a chance to see up close what Jones calls "some very large pine trees" — at least, the ones that escaped the winds of the 1989 tornado that destroyed much of the forest.

A relatively recent acquisition (2020) that Jones

mentioned is the Furnace Brook Preserve, boasting some 107 acres of field and forest sharing a boundary with the Wyantenock State Forest. The purchase was accomplished with grants received from the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the federal Highlands program and the John T. and Jane A. Wiederhold Foundation.

Because the Furnace Brook Preserve also offers connection with the Mohawk Trail, visitors can enjoy close

Continued on page 26

Oliver Wolcott Technical School, Torrington  
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### RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

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St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church	
.....	860-672-6897
The Chapel of All Saints, Episcopal	
www.allsaintscornwall.org	
for information on where services are held	
United Church of Christ in Cornwall,	

Congregational ..... 860-672-6840  
Trinity Episcopal Church, Lime Rock  
..... 860-435-2627

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Continued from page 13

County residents experiencing food insecurity. The Land Trust believes that all people deserve the comfort and nurture of locally grown produce. In partnership with Marble Valley Farm, the organization will offer 40 shares of produce, specially grown and fresh-picked each week, to families served by Kent's Food Bank. Each weekly package will be accompanied with simple recipe suggestions for enjoying the bounty. The initiative was recently awarded a Green Pastures grant from the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, which will cover a portion of the weekly delivery. More information on this vital program, including how readers can get involved, can be found on the Land Trust's website.

A final aspect of the Kent Land Trust's work is its commitment to education. Its board and staff recognize that their impact is magnified when private landowners have the tools they need to best manage their properties for wildlife habitat and climate resilience.

"This summer, we'll use our Audrey and Robert Tobin Preserve as a learning lab to teach young people, Land Trust personnel, private landowners and others how to implement best practices in forest land management to support local birds and northwest Connecticut's ecosystem," said Connie Manes, who has been the Land Trust's executive director since 2008. Last summer's internship project with Frederick Gunn School student Astrid Seufert was recently profiled in that school's newsletter: "A Civic Changemaker's Project Takes Flight" ([www.frederickgunn.org](http://www.frederickgunn.org)).

Manes is a Kent resident who is widely experienced in land conservation and protection. She helped move the Kent Land Trust to become one of the first conservation groups in the region to do the



Photo by Melissa Roth Cherniske

The Claire Murphy Riverwalk is a safe, accessible place for children to learn about the Housatonic River valley.

challenging but valuable work needed to earn it national accreditation.

In addition to her work in Kent, Manes coordinates the Regional Conservation Partnership called the Litchfield Hills Greenprint Collaborative (a program of the Housatonic Valley Association), a partnership network of more than 30 conservation organizations working in northwest Connecticut.

It is often noted that land conservation doesn't begin and end at one town's borders (or the edges of a single property). Animals, plants, water bodies and more exist without knowledge of the maps and lines created by humans.

The Greenprint serves the valuable purpose of enabling land trusts (and other government and non-government land protection organizations) to work together and link up lands so that animals, plants and, yes, humans can live and thrive together.

For more information, readers are invited to explore the Follow the Forest initiative Connecting Forest Corridors: Look for "Follow the Forest" at [www.hvatoday.org](http://www.hvatoday.org).

And to learn more about the Kent Land Trust and its many events, go to [www.kentlandtrust.org](http://www.kentlandtrust.org).

Continued from page 25

engagement with nature, including witnessing forest preservation and habitat protection firsthand.

Founded in 1987 as a nonprofit organization, at the end of 2020 CCT owned 36 properties totaling 1,923 acres, of which 946 acres were donated and the balance purchased; and held 14 conservation easements totaling 540 acres, amounting to a total of 2,453 acres conserved.

In addition to CCT's holdings, the State of Connecticut owns 20% of Cornwall's 46 square miles of land, with important forests and parks including the Housatonic State Forest expanse, which stands partially within Cornwall.

According to a 2012 pamphlet

published by the Cornwall Conservation Commission outlining the geologic history of the town, the land dates back a good 1.2 billion years or so.

There was a time, the pamphlet points out, when the hills were what the Rocky Mountains are today. Passing glaciers resculpted the terrain, leaving in their wake the giant freestanding rocks scattered today throughout Cornwall's forests.

Jones indicated that CCT cooperates with the Cornwall Conservation Commission, each supporting the other's aims and often offering joint programs that invite public participation.

For more information about the CCT and to obtain trail maps, go to [www.cornwallconservationtrust.org](http://www.cornwallconservationtrust.org).

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Building Official (Wed., 9-noon)	860-824-0707 ext. 11
Fire Marshal (by appointment).....	860-364-0909
First Selectman (Mon.-Thurs., 9-noon)	860-824-0707 ext. 23
Litchfield Hills Probate District #24	<a href="http://www.litchfieldprobate.org">www.litchfieldprobate.org</a>
Registrars of Voters (Wed., 9-noon)	860-824-0707 ext. 18
Sanitarian (Tues., 8-10). 860-489-0436 ext. 323	
Social Services (Tues. & Thurs., 8:30-3, Wed., 12-3)	860-824-9855
Tax Collector (Mon. 9-3, Wed. 9-noon)	860-824-0707 ext. 13
Town Clerk (Mon.-Wed., 9-3; Thurs., 9-noon)	860-824-0707 ext. 10
Town Garage.....	860-824-7239
Town Treasurer (Mon.-Wed., 9-3)	860-824-0707 ext. 11
Transfer Station (Tues., Fri. & Sat., 8-3)	860-824-5819
Recreation Director	<a href="mailto:recreation@canaanfallsvillage.org">recreation@canaanfallsvillage.org</a>

### PUBLIC SAFETY

#### AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

For emergencies.....	911
Falls Village Fire Department	860-824-5298
State Police Troop B, North Canaan	860-626-1820
Sanitarian (Torrington Area Health District)	860-489-0436 or <a href="http://www.tahtd.org">www.tahtd.org</a>
Sharon Hospital.....	860-364-4000

### OTHER SERVICES

D.M. Hunt Memorial Library.....	860-824-7424
Falls Village-Canaan Historical Society	860-824-8226
<a href="http://www.fallsvillage-canaanhistoricalsociety.org">www.fallsvillage-canaanhistoricalsociety.org</a>	
Falls Village Day Care Center.....	860-824-0882

### PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Explorations Charter School, Winsted	860-738-9070
Housatonic Valley Regional High School, Falls Village.....	860-824-5123
Lee H. Kellogg School.....	860-824-7791
Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Winsted.....	860-738-6300
Oliver Wolcott Technical School, Torrington	860-496-5300

### RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Falls Village Congregational Church	860-824-0194
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## The downside of protecting lots of land

BY PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

Falls Village has a lot of land that is in either de facto or de jure conservation.

The state of Connecticut, the federal government, Great Mountain Forest, The Nature Conservancy, Habitat for Humanity, the Northeast Wilderness Trust, Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy and the Appalachian Trail are some of the entities that own or control land within the town's boundaries.

The state's holdings alone take up an entire page of tax-exempt properties obtained from the assessor's office.

Some of the holdings are owned, some take the form of easements. Some are left wild, some are used for a variety of purposes.

The one thing Falls Village doesn't have is a land trust.

First Selectman Henry Todd said the town has one of the highest percentages of state and federal lands among the 169 municipalities in the state.

"There is so much protected land that it is stultifying development," he said in a phone interview.

The large amount of tax-exempt land "makes

it difficult to ease the tax burden." He added he was not including farms in his assessment.

Todd said the state's Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program underpays towns and has done so for years.

"The state is paying a fraction," he said. "If the town can't grow and you add the limits of PILOT, it really has a big impact."

Tamara Muruetagoiena, executive director at Great Mountain Forest (GMF), which has 6,000 acres in Falls Village and Norfolk (1,811.57 acres in Falls Village alone), including the administrative offices and forest access on Canaan Mountain Road, confirmed that "conservation" can mean different things to different groups.

GMF is "a working forest," she said, that produces commercial products, including maple syrup, witchhazel "and a small amount of hardwood."

GMF also sells carbon credits.

But GMF has several other functions, including education, research



Photo by Patrick L. Sullivan

Falls Village doesn't have its own land trust, mainly because thousands of acres in the town are already protected by organizations such as Great Mountain Forest.

and "sustainable forest management."

Not to mention recreation. GMF's popular hiking trails are open during daylight hours and Muruetagoiena said GMF hopes to resume its forest yoga soon. (Go to [www.greatmountainforest.org](http://www.greatmountainforest.org) for details.)

Muruetagoiena said there are sections of GMF that are deliberately left alone, for research purposes.

"We want to see how it evolves," she said. "What is

better for carbon — to leave it alone or to manage it?"

Todd noted there are land holdings by commercial entities such as Eversource and First Light that are also, in effect, in conservation.

"But at least they pay taxes," he said.

Todd acknowledged that the large amount of unspoiled land is part of the town's charm.

"But that doesn't stop the need for schools and town government."

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### ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

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Representatives in Connecticut General Assembly	
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# Understanding land trusts, conservation easements

Continued from page 5

trust will determine that stewardship of a particular property is better served on a community level, according to Abbott. Assignment of such conservation lands or easements to a successor land trust may be the most appropriate way to ensure those properties have local advocates and resources to maintain them.

The Housatonic Valley Association recently assigned a property it acquired in the 1980s to the Norfolk Land Trust, which did not exist at the time the property was protected. Unless there are especially vulnerable habitats that require specialized care, said Abbott, local stewardship and oversight can be a great option for such properties.

Last November, The Nature Conservancy turned over stewardship of the 42-acre Cathedral Pines to the Cornwall Conservation Trust in Connecticut. The property, a white pine and hemlock forest, had been donated to The Nature Conservancy in 1967 by the Calhoun family — who had purchased it in 1883 to prevent logging.

Harms praised local land trusts for their “exceptional care” and familiarity with the lands entrusted to them. “The local land trust is people from the locality who care deeply about their lands, who drive by or walk these properties all the time, who work hard to address any issues that arise, and who take seriously the charge to preserve the lands forever. That’s the benefit of local stewardship.”

## Protection is forever, but the devil is in the details

How effective and binding a conservation easement will be in the future, sometimes decades after it has been created, depends on the amount of effort and detail that go into drafting the legal agreement, said Harms. “If you are making a donation to a land trust, you need to make your intentions known to that land trust. You’ve got to be careful what it says.”

For instance, landowners have the option of allowing public access on protected lands — or restricting it. And they can impose term limits, or have the easement continue forever. “Perpetuity is one of the strongest commitments that a nonprofit can make,”

noted NCLC’s Rawson.

Conservation easements have evolved over time, influenced by new case law and hard-learned experience. They remain in place with successor land owners, and interpretation of some easement terms can become challenging.

Although it is not something a land trust

considers lightly, said Abbott, there are times when amending the terms of an easement can better serve its conservation purposes, clarifying ambiguities or even adding restrictions. In Connecticut, all easement amendments must be reviewed by the attorney general, and there are additional requirements, from the Land Trust Alliance and the IRS.

## Is there such a thing as too much conservation?

HVA’s Litchfield Hills Greenprint maintains a database of permanently protected conservation land in our region. According to Abbott, there are nearly 150,000 acres of protected land in Litchfield County — 80,000 of which are protected by government entities and 70,000 by land trusts.

Yet even communities that have large percentages of protected lands have places whose loss to development would be deeply felt. Although the state has a longstanding goal of protecting 21% of Connecticut by 2023, Abbott said, that amount may be insufficient to safeguard conservation resources in places like northwest Connecticut with its mix of farmland soils, rare habitats, clean fresh water and extensive forested uplands.

“With a changing climate,” said Abbott, “land protection is a vital tool and resource for local communities who, with land trusts as strong conservation partners, are working to mitigate its impacts and conserve what makes our region so special and so loved by those who live and visit here.”



Photo by Tim Abbott, Housatonic Valley Association

Wachocastinook Falls, Mount Riga

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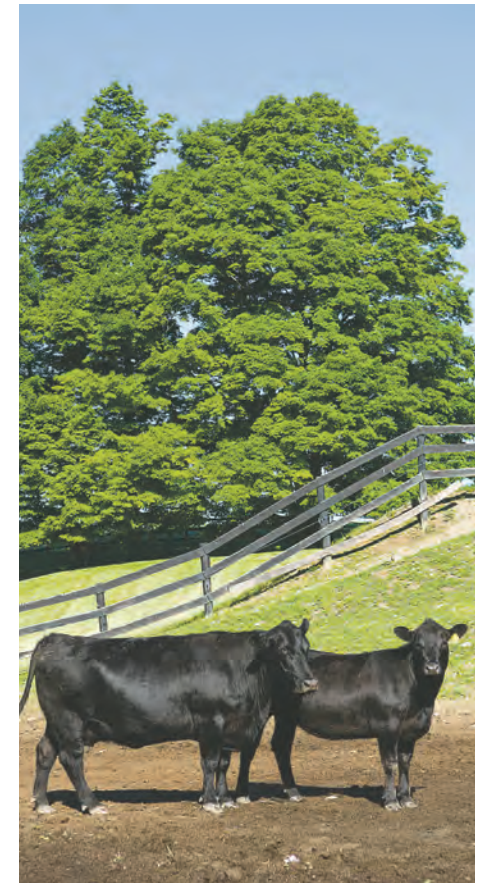


Photo courtesy of Dutchess Land Conservancy



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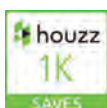
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D'Alton Preserve. © Jonathan Doster

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Assessor (Mon., 9-noon, Wed. & Thurs., 9-noon & 1-4).....	860-364-0205
Building Inspector and Fire Marshal (Mon.-Fri., 7-noon; Sat., 8-9 a.m.)	
Inspector: Mon.-Fri., 8-9 a.m.).....	860-364-0909
First Selectman.....	860-364-5789
Land Use Administrator (Mon.-Fri., 7-noon).....	860-364-0909
Litchfield Hills Probate District #24.....	www.litchfieldprobate.org
Recreation Office.....	860-364-1400
Registrars (Tues., 10-noon).....	860-364-5514
Social Services (Tues., Wed. & Thurs., 8-6).....	860-364-1003
Tax Collector (Mon., Wed. & Thurs., 9-3:30).....	860-364-5402
Town Clerk (Mon.-Thurs., 8:30-noon & 1-4, Fri., 8:30-noon).....	860-364-5224
Transfer Station (Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat., 8-4; Sun., 9-1).....	860-435-5178

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

For emergencies.....	911
Sharon Fire Department and Ambulance.....	860-364-5254
State Police Troop B, North Canaan.....	860-626-1820
Director of Health.....	860-364-9397 or 860-364-0909
Sharon Hospital.....	860-364-4000

## OTHER SERVICES

Hotchkiss Library of Sharon.....	860-364-5041
Sharon Day Care Center.....	860-364-5182
Sharon Historical Society.....	www.sharonhist.org; 860-364-5688

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Explorations Charter School, Winsted.....	860-738-9070
Housatonic Valley Regional High School Warren Turnpike, Falls Village.....	860-824-5123
Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Winsted.....	860-738-6300
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## RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

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Congregation Beth David, Amenia, N.Y.....	845-373-8264

# Preserving, conserving for a rural future

BY LEILA HAWKEN

It's as old as the hills, yet it never gets old. Anyone who travels Route 41 between Sharon and Salisbury in Connecticut is drawn to the scenic view to the west.

It is grand, breathtaking and relaxing. Its generous expanse is a wondrous distraction from whatever mundane errand brought you to that spot.

Newcomers today might not realize that it was thanks to the land trust organizations in Sharon and Salisbury — along with private donations and a generous gift from the late Robert Blum — that this acreage (now known as the Twin Oaks Preserve) was protected from development in April 1998. The beautiful 70-acre parcel is known locally as Twin Oaks.

Maria Grace, who has been executive director of the Sharon Land Trust (SLT) since 2017, points to the acquisition of the Twin Oaks Preserve as a major achievement, crediting broad community support and especially to the efforts of early board members such as Larry Power and the late Garrett Goodbody.

Goodbody was also instrumental in the protection of the southern end of Indian Mountain/Mudge Mountain in 2001.

Both properties are open to the public today for passive recreation, Grace said, allowing visitors to get some fresh air and, often, to get a new perspective on the town in which they live, thanks to expansive views from the peaks and hilltops that are an integral part of many of the trails.

Currently, the Sharon Land Trust anticipates protecting 168 more acres, a part of the von Ahn Farm along Millerton Road.

The property is considered an important part of a potential wildlife migration corridor of protected forest.

Its acquisition would also protect critical watershed land. Partial funding is being provided by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and the Sharon Land Trust is hoping for additional funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

When combined, the two sources would cover 75% of



Photo courtesy of Sharon Land Trust

Land Trust board members, from left, Roger Liddell, Jill Drew, Jim Krissel, Lynden Miller and Skip Mattoon, at one of the restored gates at the Twin Oaks Preserve on Mudgetown Road.

the purchase cost, and then the Land Trust would look to community support to raise the balance.

"We are small, but mighty," Grace said of the SLT as it works to promote the "stewardship of our lands through preservation and conservation for the benefit of nature and the community."

She praises the work of the Land Trust's many volunteers, whether they serve on the board or help to build or maintain trails.

Volunteers also monitor

properties.

"We would not exist or be as successful were it not for our core group of volunteers," she said.

During the past year, SLT's trail system has seen a major increase in public usage, undoubtedly the consequence of COVID-19's impact on the community.

"Preserves are just as important for people as they are for wildlife."

In addition to preserving the land, Grace said it is

Continued on page 34

Sharon Congregational Church.....	860-364-5002
Saint Bernard's Roman Catholic Church.....	860-364-5244
Sharon United Methodist Church.....	860-364-5634

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*Continued from page 33*

also important to care for it and ensure that it enhances the biological productivity of surrounding ecosystems.

Part of the Sharon Land Trust's work is to engage fully in protecting the land from the onslaught of invasive plants and the threat they pose to the health and welfare of the lands being conserved.

Grace is pleased that the Sharon Land Trust is engaged in a multi-year program to battle the continued spread of invasive marauding vegetation on its properties. She believes that these SLT efforts today will protect the area's ecological integrity for generations to follow.

The Sharon Land Trust came

into being in 1982, but aside from modest preservation efforts and acquisitions, was fairly inactive — until the late 1990s, that is, when action was critically needed. At that point, the organization had only a small membership, but soon grew to more than 300 residents committed to preserving Sharon's views.

Today, Grace indicates that the Sharon Land Trust owns 1,442 acres and manages conservation easements on more than 1,800 additional acres. The organization maintains more than 20 miles of trails for visitors to enjoy for hiking and passive recreation, with new ones under construction right now.

The work of the Sharon Land Trust goes on, protecting and conserving farmland, vistas, meadows

and waterways, and serving as good stewards of the lands that make Sharon a beautiful spot to contemplate, and if one is fortunate, to live in.

Through assembling additional tracts and creating trail systems, SLT foresees attracting visitors seeking recreation, relaxation and even consolation. Could Sharon eventually become a destination for those desiring a comprehensive natural experience? Combined with area attributes including the Housatonic River, the Appalachian Trail, Audubon Sharon and public lands of adjoining communities, why not?

For maps and more information about the Sharon Land Trust and its properties open to the public, go to [www.sharonlandtrust.org](http://www.sharonlandtrust.org).



*Photo courtesy of Sharon Land Trust*

The Sharon Land Trust invites you to take a hike on one of its public preserves. Pictured here is a section of the Cliff Loop Trail at the Mary Moore Preserve.



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## KEY SERVICES

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Assessor (Mon. - Wed., 7-12)	860-542-5287
Building Official (Mon., Tues. & Thurs., 10-noon)	860-542-6986
Litchfield Hills Probate District #24	www.litchfieldprobate.org
Norfolk Sewer District	860-542-5647
First Selectman (Mon.-Thu., 9-4:30; Fri., 9-noon)	860-542-5829
Tax Collector (Tues., 1-4, Wed. & Thurs., 9-12)	860-542-5140
Town Clerk (Mon.-Thurs., 8:30-noon & 1-4; Fri., 8:30-noon)	860-542-5679
Transfer Station	860-542-5829
Zoning Officer (Mon., 9-noon, Tues., 9-noon & 1-4:30)	860-542-6804

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

For emergencies	911
Norfolk Volunteer Fire Department & Ambulance	860-542-5021
Resident State Trooper	860-542-5249
State Police Troop B, North Canaan	860-626-1820
Sanitarian (Torrington Area Health District)	860-489-0436 or www.tahtd.org
Sharon Hospital	860-364-4000

## OTHER SERVICES

Norfolk Historical Society	860-542-5761
www.norfolkhistoricalsociety.org	
Norfolk Senior Housing Corp. (Meadowbrook)	860-542-5470
Norfolk Land Trust	860-307-8380
Norfolk Library	860-542-5075

## SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Botelle Elementary School (Grades pre-K, K-6)	860-542-5286
Explorations Charter School, Winsted	860-738-9070
Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Winsted	860-738-6300
Northwestern Regional School District 7 (Grades 7-12), Winsted	860-379-8525
Oliver Wolcott Technical School, Torrington	860-496-5300
Yale Summer School of Music and Art, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival	860-542-3000
June - August	203-432-1966
September - May	

## RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

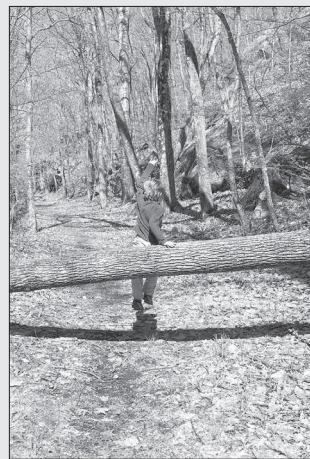
Church of Christ, Congregational	860-542-5721
Immaculate Conception, Catholic	860-542-5442

# Norfolk Land Trust takes proactive approach to conservation, preservation

BY DEBRA A. ALEKSINAS

Since 1982, the all-volunteer Norfolk Land Trust (NLT) has been committed to promoting the conservation of Norfolk's natural resources for future generations.

To date, the NLT has preserved 4,269 acres, 1,102 of which are properties owned by the Land Trust; another 3,167 comprise conservation easements. These natural resources include pristine water courses, fertile wetlands, rolling meadows, lush woodlands and the plants and wildlife native to these habitats.



The Stoney Lonesome section of the Billings Trail in Norfolk.

According to Libby Borden, president of the organization, many of these acquisitions help maintain a north-south wildlife corridor and have enhanced the organization's extensive trail system. NLT helps preserve tracts of land in and around Norfolk — including North Canaan, Colebrook and Winchester — that support conservation, recreation, scenic and local historical and cultural values.

"We are a proactive organization. We do a lot of outreach," said Borden. "We have a dedicated board of directors of 16 volunteers and between 30 and 40 volunteers who are actively involved in all aspects of the lands entrusted to it."

In addition to the board of directors and volunteers, said Borden, NLT has about 200 members who contribute financially through generous gifts, which supplement government grants and innovative financing vital for maintaining current properties and acquiring future parcels.

NLT is a 501(c)(3) organization, and donations help the trust maintain more



Photos courtesy of Norfolk Land Trust

The Kopp property encompasses 235 acres and links other protected lands to form a large wilderness corridor in South Norfolk.

than 20 miles of trails, host programs for the community and protect the open space and beauty of land in Norfolk and surrounding communities. The organization is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

One of NLT's current projects is known as the Kopp property, which encompasses 235 acres and links other protected lands to form a large wilderness corridor in South Norfolk, according to the organization's vice president, Shelley Harms.

"Recently, the state announced that it will provide an Open Space and

Watershed Land Acquisition grant of \$328,000 toward the purchase," said Harms. "We hope to raise the remaining funds we need and close on it by the end of the year. The property is spectacular, with its large pond, headwater streams for Winchester Lake and the Naugatuck River, rolling topography, and existing wood roads that will become hiking trails for people to enjoy."

With the arrival of warmer weather, hiking trails are a treasured destination for pandemic-weary residents and visitors, noted Borden, an avid walker herself. Her

Continued on page 37

## ELECTED OFFICERS

First Selectman	
Matthew T. Riiska	860-542-5829
Representatives in Connecticut General Assembly	
Sen. Kevin Witkos (8th District)	800-842-1421
Rep. Maria Horn (64th District)	800-842-8267

Representative in Congress	
Jahana Hayes (5th District)	Waterbury 860-223-8412
	Washington 202-225-4476
United States Senators	
Richard Blumenthal	Hartford 860-258-6940
	Washington 202-224-2823

Chris Murphy	
	Hartford 860-549-8463
	Washington 202-224-4041
Governor	
Ned Lamont	800-406-1527

## KEY SERVICES

Animal Control.....	860-307-8917
Assessor ( <i>Tues. &amp; Thurs., 9-noon &amp; 1-4</i> )	860-824-7313 ext. 108
Building Official.....	860-824-7313 ext. 191
Burning Official.....	860-307-3461
Fire Marshal.....	860-824-3132 ext. 193
Highway Dept.....	860-824-7313 ext. 117
North Canaan Housing Authority ( <i>Wangum Village</i> ).....	860-824-0521
Litchfield Hills Probate District #24	www.litchfieldprobate.org
Recreation Director.....	860-248-0970
Registrars of Voters.....	860-824-7313 ext. 111
Resident State Trooper	860-824-7313 ext. 112
First Selectman ( <i>Mon.-Thurs., 8-4</i> )	860-824-7313 ext. 101
Social Services ( <i>Mon. -Wed., 9-noon &amp; 1-4</i> )	860-824-7313 ext. 110
Tax Collector ( <i>Tues. &amp; Thurs., 9-noon &amp; 1-3</i> )	860-824-3133 ext. 109
Town Clerk ( <i>Mon.-Thurs., 8:30-noon and 1-3</i> )	860-824-7313 ext. 106
Transfer Station.....	860-824-7313 ext. 118
Treasurer.....	860-824-7313 ext. 105
Zoning Enforcement Officer ( <i>Tues. &amp; Wed. 10-2</i> )	860-824-7313 ext. 192

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

For emergencies.....	911
Canaan Fire Company.....	860-824-7366
North Canaan Volunteer Ambulance Corps	860-824-7219
Resident State Trooper.....	860-626-1820, 860-824-7313 ext. 112
State Police Troop B, <i>North Canaan</i>	860-626-1820
Sanitarian ( <i>Torrington Area Health District</i> )	860-489-0436 or www.tahtd.org
Sharon Hospital.....	860-364-4000

## OTHER SERVICES

Canaan Child Care Center.....	860-824-0597
Douglas Library.....	860-824-7863
Canaan History Center	kathrynwboughton@gmail.com
Fishes and Loaves Food Pantry at Pilgrim House ( <i>Tues., 5-7; Thurs. noon-2</i> ).....	860-824-7232
Geer Village Senior Community	860-824-2600
Mountainside Treatment Center	860-824-1397
Northwestern Connecticut YMCA at Geer	860-499-3195

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Explorations Charter School, <i>Winsted</i>	860-738-9070
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# Robbins Swamp: A biologically diverse ecosystem in North Canaan

BY DEBRA A. ALEKSINAS

To many, a swamp is more an eyesore than eye candy. But those who peer beyond its surface will find a biologically diverse ecosystem made of precious wetlands and an array of flora and fauna, including rare and endangered species.

Such is the case for a 24-acre parcel located within the 1,500-acre Robbins Swamp inland wetland complex, said to be one of the largest in Connecticut. The property, part of a larger tract purchased by the Hitchcock family in 1899 and originally known as Meadowland Farm, was given in perpetuity to the Norfolk Land Trust (NLT) in 2016 by the family.

The state of Connecticut, and The Nature Conservancy, also hold land within the Robbins Swamp inland wetland complex. Because there is no community land trust in North Canaan to accept land donations, the NLT was approached by a representative of the Litchfield Hills Greenprint

Collaborative about assuming stewardship of the parcel.

“In addition to owning the Robbins Swamp parcel, we hold several large easements in North Canaan,” said Shelley Harms, NLT’s vice president. “We are out on all of our properties every year, and we have a very active committee, including the stewardship committee, which oversees all the monitoring.”

The beauty of a local land trust, said Harms, is that “we are on the ground, driving by or walking the property nearly every day.”

The Robbins Swamp property, she noted, is one of several acquired since 2016 and it is among the more than 4,000 acres of open space NLT protects with either ownership or conservation easements in Norfolk and surrounding communities, including North Canaan, Colebrook and Winchester.

“NLT’s conservation lands in North Canaan are 24 acres owned [Robbins Swamp]; and we hold five



Photo courtesy Norfolk Land Trust

The Robbins Swamp easement protects 24 acres of mostly wetlands between Route 7 and Sand Road.

conservation easements that are either entirely in North Canaan or straddle the border between Norfolk and North Canaan,” said Harms. The five easements, she said, total 1,175 acres.

A year after the Robbins Swamp acquisition, NLT commissioned a 10-year Forest Stewardship Plan for the property, which runs through 2027. An inventory of the property was conducted that summer to determine how to best implement the natural resource stewardship

objectives.

The 24-acre protected parcel is located between Route 7 and Sand Road in North Canaan (parts of the swamp are in Falls Village, too) and has an accessway next to the town’s VFW Post.

The property drains into a brook that runs through the property and flows northerly to the Blackberry River, and then the waters flow westerly into the Housatonic River, and from there to Long Island Sound. There is no current road or trail system on the property.

Housatonic Valley Regional High School, <i>Falls Village</i> .....	860-824-5123
North Canaan Elementary School	860-824-5149
Northwestern Connecticut Community College, <i>Winsted</i> .....	860-738-6300
Oliver Wolcott Technical School, <i>Torrington</i>	860-496-5300

## RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Canaan United Methodist.....	860-824-5534
North Canaan Congregational	860-824-7232
Promised Land Baptist.....	860-824-5685

Seventh-day Adventist.....	860-824-5830
St. Joseph Church, <i>Catholic</i>	860-824-7078

## ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

First Selectman	Charles P. Perotti.....	860-824-7313 ext.103
Representatives in Connecticut General Assembly	Sen. Craig Miner ( <i>30th District</i> )	800-842-1421
	Rep. Maria Horn ( <i>64th District</i> )	800-842-8267

Representative in Congress <i>Jahana Hayes (5th District)</i>	Waterbury 860-223-8412	Washington 202-225-4476
United States Senators <i>Richard Blumenthal</i>	Hartford 860-258-6940	Washington 202-224-2823
	Chris Murphy	Hartford 860-549-8463
		Washington 202-224-4041
Governor <i>Ned Lamont</i>		800-406-1527



Photo by Janet Manko

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[www.norfolkct.org](http://www.norfolkct.org)

*Continued from page 35*

favorite destination, she said, is the 205-acre Barbour Woods property that has an entrance right in town. "It's got beautiful trails; some people refer to it as Norfolk Central Park," added Harms.

Included among the organization's Norfolk acquisitions is the 311-acre purchase from the Girl Scouts of Connecticut in 2013 of forestland north of the Mad River, known as Pine Mountain; the 1482 Property comprising 208 acres off Winchester Road; and Riggs Hill, a 94-acre parcel in South Norfolk.

In addition, in 2018 the land trust

preserved more than 38 acres of prime forestland that abuts Tobey Pond and borders Great Mountain Forest on two sides. Known as the Norfolk Downs easement, the agreement with landowner Betsy Gill was the result of months of work by land trust members and Great Mountain Forest.

NLT is one of several organizations that preserves and conserves lands in Norfolk, said Harms. "Great Mountain Forest, The Nature Conservancy and Aton Forest are some others in town," she explained. "People support their local land trust, which is why all that is possible," added NLT's vice president. "It is so important."

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Freshtown.....	Amenia, NY	Kent Apothecary.....	Kent, CT	LaBonne's Market.....	Salisbury, CT
Farmer's Wife.....	Ancramdale, NY	Kent Convenience.....	Kent, CT	Salisbury General Store.....	Salisbury, CT
Extra Mart.....	Canaan, CT	Interlaken Inn.....	Lakeville, CT	Extra Mart.....	Sharon, CT
Patco.....	Canaan, CT	On The Run.....	Lakeville, CT	J.P. Gifford.....	Sharon, CT
Stop & Shop.....	Canaan, CT	Patco.....	Lakeville, CT	Sharon Package Store.....	Sharon, CT
Walgreens.....	Canaan, CT	CVS.....	Litchfield, CT	Sharon Pharmacy.....	Sharon, CT
Cornwall Country Market.....	Cornwall Bridge, CT	Stop & Shop.....	Litchfield, CT	Silk's Variety.....	Sheffield, MA
Falls Village Package.....	Falls Village, CT	Cumberland Farms.....	Millerton, NY	Cumberland Farms.....	207 S. Main St., Torrington
Lakeville Journal Office.....	Falls Village, CT	CVS.....	Millerton, NY	Patco.....	N. Main St., Torrington, CT
Route 7 Fuel.....	Falls Village, CT	Gulf Mart.....	Millerton, NY	Am Citgo.....	954 Main St., Winsted, CT
Village Market.....	Goshen, CT	Round III.....	Millerton, NY	CVS.....	Winsted, CT
ExtraMart.....	Great Barrington, MA	Stop and Save.....	New Hartford, CT	Henny Penny.....	Winsted, CT
Bull's Bridge Garage.....	Kent, CT	Berkshire Country Store.....	Norfolk, CT	Stop & Shop.....	Winsted, CT

## <sup>The</sup>MILLERTON NEWS

Amenia Pharmacy.....	Amenia, NY	Lakeville Journal Office.....	Falls Village, CT	Pine Plains Pharmacy.....	Pine Plains, NY
Cumberland Farms.....	Amenia, NY	Davis IGA.....	Kent, CT	Stewart's.....	Pine Plains, NY
Freshtown.....	Amenia, NY	Marona's Market.....	Millbrook, NY	LaBonne's Market.....	Salisbury, CT
Farmer's Wife.....	Ancramdale, NY	Stewart's.....	Millbrook, NY	Extra Mart.....	Sharon, CT
Citgo-Rt. 22.....	Copake, NY	Cumberland Farms.....	Millerton, NY	Sharon Pharmacy.....	Sharon, CT
Copake Sunoco.....	Copake, NY	CVS Millerton.....	Millerton, NY	Sharon Package Store.....	Sharon, CT
Carol's Gift.....	Dover Plains, NY	Gulf Mart.....	Millerton, NY	McCarthy's Pharmacy.....	Stanfordville, NY
Cumberland Farms.....	Dover Plains, NY	Round III.....	Millerton, NY	Patco.....	Torrington, CT
CVS.....	Dover Plains, NY	The Dig on Main.....	Millerton, NY		
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*– Caroline Burchfield, Director of Community Relations, Noble Horizons*

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