

# Conservation News

Protecting Open Space on Long Island's North Shore

## NORTH SHORE LAND ALLIANCE

Volume 16, Issue 32

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*Photo Credit: Phyllis Weekes*

## Worth the Wait

The Humes Preserve opened to the public without much more than a peep! We'd originally envisioned celebrations with Land Alliance members and donors at a preserve pre-opening. Followed by a press conference with supportive elected officials and complete with a native butterfly release with lots of children nearby. But then COVID-19 came and didn't go away...

Instead, on September 30th, being responsible, we simply opened the gate and let people trickle in. And we are so glad they came! Not in large numbers at first, but in small and manageable order that ensured safety and compliance with State protocols. By early fall, the meadow was filled with purple top grasses as high as your waist. The paths in the meadow had been mowed and hundreds of wildflowers planted in the spring (such as bee balm, black-eyed Susan and garden phlox) were blooming. Understory trees had been planted, thanks to the generosity of many. The entry allee lined with pink dogwood was starting to fill in. And the native butterfly came without our help as did the people.

The undulating new woodland trails above Dogwood Lane became hardened prior to the opening with visitors from adjoining Shu Swamp Preserve wandering in. Oak and

*(Continued on pg. 3)*



Senate Majority Leader  
Mitch McConnell (R-KY)

Dear Friends,

First and foremost, we hope this note finds you and your family well and enjoying an extraordinarily beautiful fall. With the prospects of a COVID-19 vaccine coming soon, a contentious election season behind us and the holidays tapping at the door, the days seem a bit brighter. Hopefulness is in the air!

As we embark upon a new chapter, I am hopeful our country will reconnect around shared values like love for the natural world and our fellow man. Fred Rich, a friend, a respected corporate lawyer and a leader in the conservation community, wrote a book several years ago titled *Getting to Green/Saving Nature: A Bipartisan Solution*. It suggested the “Green” movement in America had lost its way. At the time, polling from the Pew Charitable Trusts cited the environment as one of the two things

Democrats and Republicans disagreed about most. Until the recent passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, Congress had not passed a landmark piece of environmental legislation for more than 50 years! In addition, federal spending on the environment decreased from 4% of the federal budget a decade ago to less than 1% today.

I am hopeful 2021 will be the year we bring “Green” back. We can do that by putting aside the partisanship that has divided us in favor of taking urgently needed action on the environment. I am hopeful compromise can prevail and we can again reach across the aisle and work toward the common good. With CO2 emissions continuing their relentless climb, the need to work together for a healthy future increases every day.

Working together is something our community does well! In this issue of the *Conservation News*, we will talk about how our members stepped up to help us open the Humes Preserve to the public. We will unveil the 2021 Walks in the Woods lineup and pay tribute to our knowledgeable volunteer leaders. We’ll introduce our new Water Quality Improvement Coordinator and explain how nitrogen pollution can be reduced in local waters. We’ll even visit the Florida Everglades, where nitrogen pollution is also taking its toll. Finally, we will celebrate winning conservation ballot measures across the country and pay tribute to our many friends who supported Land Alliance events in this challenging year.

It is indeed a pleasure and an honor to work among you. To quote Helen Keller, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

Unfortunately, we are not out of the woods on COVID-19 yet. Remain vigilant, stay well and continue to enjoy the change of the seasons and all the outdoors our beautiful community has to offer.

Yours in conversation,

Lisa W. Ott  
President & CEO





beech trees towering above the paths provided an up-close and personal experience with some of the most majestic trees that remain in our community. The gravel parking lot had settled in alongside the newly restored tennis hut/visitor center and formal gardens. In addition, the recently completed outdoor exercise area had started to meld into its natural environment and people were putting it to good use.

If you have not yet visited the Humes Preserve, you should. While the official street number is yet to be approved, it will be 349 Oyster Bay Road, Mill Neck. The Humes Preserve is open sunup to sundown year-round. To repeat the sentiment expressed in our last newsletter, we hope this will be a place where people can connect with nature's wonders while appreciating the richness of the past and working together to build a better future. Speaking of the future, we are pleased to report that we started the planning process to make the Tavern House at the Humes Preserve the Land Alliance's future home.

Sometimes pictures speak better than words. We hope the photographs closing this story will inspire you to

come soon (and often) to enjoy this wonderful public space. We are very proud of it! We also are extremely grateful to all who have helped us with the preserve to date and those of you who will work with us to steward this community treasure going forward.





## Many thanks to our friends who purchased trees to be planted at the Humes Preserve.

*“He who plants a tree, plants a hope.” ~ Lucy Larson ~*

Allison and Jay Aston  
Carole and Andrew Bates  
Veronica and Jamie Beard  
Elizabeth and Christopher Bonner  
Carol and Stephen Canter  
Michelle and Brad Cuddeback  
Denine and Henry De Leon  
Kate and Chad Doerge  
Eliza and Bjorn Franson  
Carolina and Diego Fuschetto  
Kelly and Chip Gaudreau  
Courtney and Andrew Geisel

Samantha and John Gellert  
Jennifer and Joseph Grgas  
Manda and Albert Kalimian  
Susan Karches,  
in memory of Peter Karches  
Allison and Robert Kellan,  
in memory of Salvatore J. Trani  
Nazee and Roddy Klotz  
Terry and Robert Lindsay,  
In memory of Toni Hunter  
Breck and Lel Gimbel  
Alexis and Timothy McAndrew

Friends Academy students,  
Michael Mead and Blake Nagel  
Susan and Jeff Moore  
Lisa and Gil Ott  
Harriet and John Pappas  
David P. Pearson  
Ainsley Earhardt Proctor  
Christin and Tommy Rueger  
Bliss and Baldwin Smith  
Maryam and Arash Yaraghi

## Stepping up to the Plate



Tommy Bostwick of Bostwick Capital adopted a conservation ethic early on. He fondly remembers time spent outside helping his Dad care for the nearby Jane B. Francke Sanctuary in Old Brookville. When he saw the stewardship responsibility the Land Alliance was taking on at Humes, he stepped up to help. His firm launched a dollar-for-dollar matching gift challenge up to \$15,000 to develop a Stewardship Fund for the Preserve. Within weeks, his friends responded and

\$33,500 was raised to help the Land Alliance maintain this community treasure for years to come. Tommy requested that the fund be named after his good friend Carl C. Wermee of CW Athletes who was instrumental in the success of this wonderful campaign. Carl brings joy and education about a healthy lifestyle to many, as evidenced by this long list of contributors. Thank you all!

### Thank you to the Bostwick challenge matching gift donors.

Louise Armstrong  
Lily Bostwick  
Stokes Bostwick  
Bostwick Capital  
Andrew Callan  
Kerian and Eric Carlstrom  
Brooke Cooper  
Laura and William Dorson  
Lindsay and Scott Fox  
Thayer Fox  
Justin Fredericks  
Amanda and Sam Goldworm  
Megan and Thomas Grant  
Andrea and Benjamin Griswold

Jenna and Henry Hager  
Milena and D.R. Holmes  
Emily Hottensen  
Jane Hottensen  
Denise Lansing  
Rachel and O'Donnell Lee  
Patricia and Mark Mayer  
Christopher Mumford  
Victoria and Peter Munsill  
Lisa and Gil Ott  
Claudia and Gunnar Overstrom  
Carol and Nicholas Paumgarten  
Hilary and Frank Polk  
Catherine and Konrad Schwarz

Jennifer and Salil Seshadri  
Jay Sullivan  
Sara and James Sullivan  
Virginia and Walter Tomenson  
Carl Wermee  
Gus Wilmerding  
Catherine and Harrison Wilson  
David Wilson  
James Wilson  
Peter Wilson, Jr.  
Marion Wood  
Melissa and Chris Worth

## John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden Updates



*John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden*

As we close for our 2020 season, we are thrilled to announce we have paid off our debt on the 2017 purchase of the John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden! Our final payment of \$177,500 on our loan was made in October.

Though this is cause for celebration in itself, we are also happy to report that the Stroll Garden, like our other preserves, provided a place of refuge for thousands of

visitors during the pandemic this year. Our garden attendants patiently limited the number of people in the Garden at one time, both for social distancing purposes and to protect the Garden's sensitivity. This was no small task. We learned how critical it is to add personnel to monitor activity inside the Garden while the attendant manages entry into it. We hope to see you next year.





**Several specially scheduled programs were held during 2020:**

- We are ever so grateful to Daniel Nyohaku Soergel, who donated a Saturday each month throughout the season to delight and educate visitors with beautiful and haunting sounds from the shakuhachi, a Japanese flute.
- Long Island Bonsai Society member Hal Johnson organized a striking two-day-long display at our kadan. He was there for the duration to demonstrate tools and techniques and field visitors' questions. We hope in future years we will have upgraded our kadan, but we will need to raise funds to do so.
- Storyteller extraordinaire Karen De Mauro led an afternoon walk, accompanied by Japanese stories, inspiring anecdotes, a group Haiku gathering and reflective moments.
- Michael Veracka, SUNY Farmingdale Associate Professor in Urban Horticulture and Design, led a very informative and entertaining walk about bamboo in northeastern landscapes – the good, the bad and the ugly!

Weekly volunteer stewardship sessions led by our gifted garden manager, Mary Schmutz, continue year-round, weather permitting.

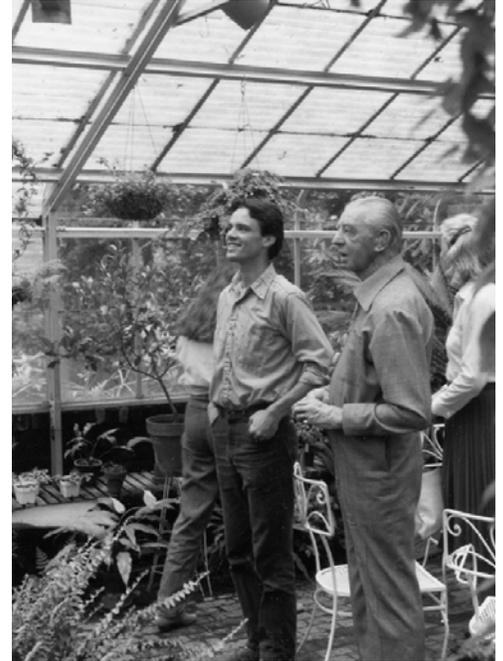
Hats off to Mary, to our volunteer program leaders and to our stewardship volunteers, especially: Linda Darby, Daria Hokun, Hanna Hokun, Rich Kopsco, Ken Krumenacker, Chas Merrill, Dylan Noble, John Rochford, Joel Shaw, Mary Shimono, Rose Shimono, Paul Silchenstedt, Sofi Solomon, Sam Strube, Greg Viscovich and Jeanne Wu.

And to our garden attendants: Chelsea Farinacci, Mary Shimono, Bob Ventresca, Calvin Viscovich (with help from his mom, Lisa).

*“A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust.”*

~ Gertrude Jekyll ~

## Schmidlapp-Humes Estate Listed on Registers of Historic Places



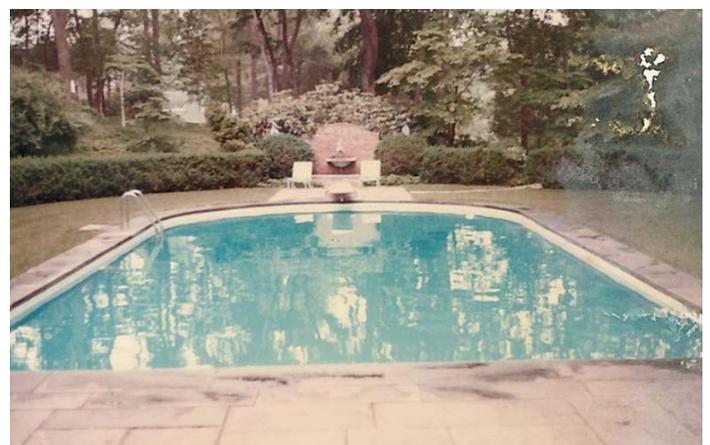
This past spring the Land Alliance made application to have the Schmidlapp-Humes Estate Historic District listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The area making up the historic district encompasses 81 acres of the original 83-acre country estate that Carl and Frances Schmidlapp built from 1923 to 1927. The District includes the Land Alliance's Humes Preserve and John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden, the lower half of Shu Swamp (30 acres formerly known as the Schmidlapp Lowlands), Nassau County land protected as part of the 2008 Environmental Bond

Program and two private properties that were the former estate's main house and stable complex.

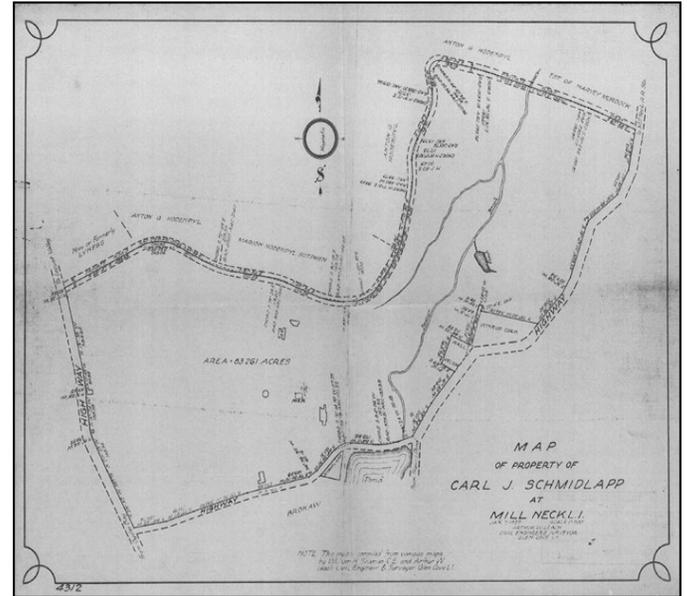
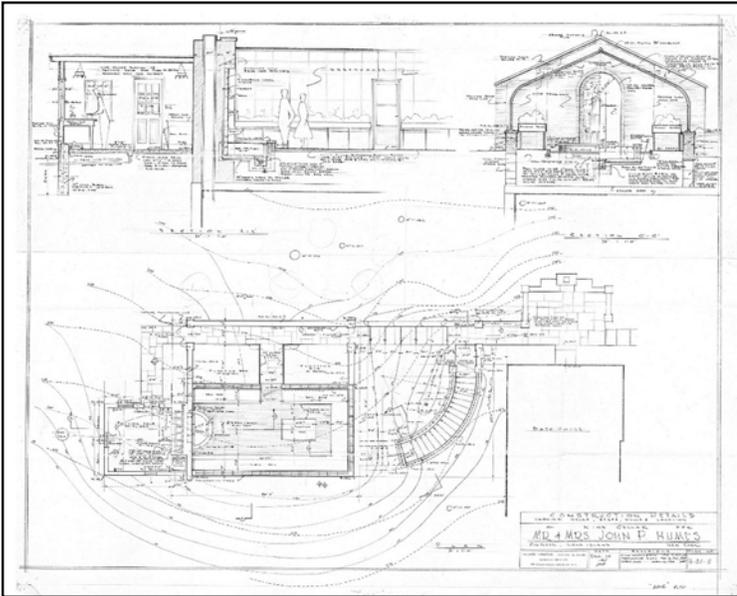
The Schmidlapp-Humes Estate is recognized as a significant cultural landscape associated with the development of summer estates on the North Shore of Long Island during the second wave of the Country Estate Era. It also is considered significant in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture because of people the Humes and Schmidlapps hired to make improvements on the property from 1921 through



Frances and Carl Schmidlapp's pool circa 1930 designed by Ferruccio Vitale, Vitale & Geiffert (now part of a private residence)



Jean Schmidlapp and John Humes pool circa 1970s designed by Innocenti & Webel. Richard K. Webel and Umberto Innocenti worked for Vitale & Geiffert in 1930 and later formed their own firm.



1966. Some of the Gold Coast's most noted and prolific architects and landscape architects including Peabody, Wilson & Brown, Ellen Biddle Shipman, Ferruccio Vitale and Innocenti & Webel were involved in projects there. Later architects included Bradley Delehanty and Alfred Shaknis as well as Japanese Stroll Garden designer Douglas DeFaya. They all helped to craft what the property reflects today.

Preservation grants supported this project and allowed the Land Alliance to work with historic consultants on the surveys and inventories that served as the basis for our application for listing. This historic designation makes the properties eligible for various public preservation programs and services, such as matching

grants. The Land Alliance has already begun to pursue grants for the adaptive reuse of the Tavern House to serve as our future offices. The surveys, inventories and application also permanently document the significance of the former estate for the community and broader public. An overview of the evolution of the property is on display at the Humes Preserve tennis hut.

To view the presentation that Patricia O'Donnell of Heritage Landscape Architects has shared with us: please visit our website at [www.northshorelandalliance.org/videos](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org/videos).



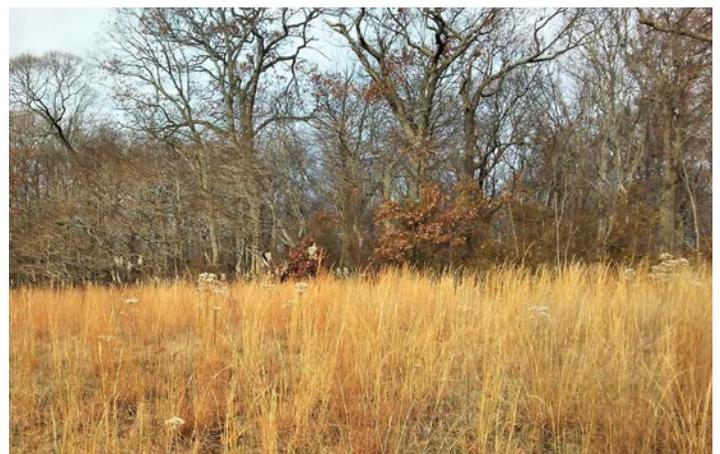
## Loss of Plant Species



**Biodiversity is being lost** – locally, regionally and globally. It is now estimated that approximately one third of global plant species are at risk of extinction. Scientists say that plant extinction is occurring up to 500 times faster than what would be expected naturally. Over the last 250 years, almost 600 plant species have disappeared. Over the course of our lifetimes, it is possible that another 130,000 plant species could be wiped out if we do not take action now.

**Plants are very important to our planet; they form the critical base of food chains in nearly all ecosystems.** Without plants there would be no oxygen to breathe and no food to eat. In addition, plants help filter water and air, contain many medicinal properties and provide humans with the ability to make fire and build houses.

Scientists believe humanity is a long way from utilizing the full potential of biodiversity, in particular plants and fungi. They also believe it is critical to explore the



solutions plants could provide to the many global threats we face today. For example, rice and corn are staples to more than half the people on earth. It is estimated that by 2050 10 billion people will inhabit the planet. (That is a lot of rice and corn to go around!) Researching the earth's edible plants is key to finding food sources that will be able to sustain our growing population. According to a study conducted by the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in London, there are nearly 7,000 species of edible plants on earth (not including famine foods eaten during emergencies), yet only around 400 of them are currently considered food crops. Scientists are working to find alternative food sources.

### Why are plants disappearing?

It's plain and simple - human activities are accelerating the loss of biodiversity. The greatest threats to plant species include habitat loss, climate change, pollution and overexploitation. Every hour, 6000 acres of rainforest are burned or cut down to make way for agriculture, livestock, logging and mining. In a single year, the ozone pollution in India kills enough crops to feed 94 million people.

### What can YOU DO?

Long Island is home to many different species of trees, shrubs, wildflowers and grasses. If you are not already doing so, consider planting Long Island natives on your property! Restoring native plant communities is vital to preserving Long Island's biodiversity, providing shelter and nutritious food for pollinators and other desirable wildlife and helping prevent invasive species from taking over.



## Sources for Native Plants:



**(1) Long Island Native Plant Initiative and its native plant sales – the best!** Plants sold by LINPI are not only native but also genetically appropriate (ecotypic) for Long Island.  
[www.linpi.org](http://www.linpi.org)

**(2) NYC Parks Department of Parks Natural Resources Group's Greenbelt Native Plant Center** – availability of plants for sale to general public may be somewhat limited but DEFINITELY worth looking into.  
[www.nycgovparks.org/greening/greenbelt-native-plant-center/products](http://www.nycgovparks.org/greening/greenbelt-native-plant-center/products)

**(3) Long Island Natives**  
[www.longislandnatives.com](http://www.longislandnatives.com)

**(4) Glover Perennials**  
[www.gloverperennials.com](http://www.gloverperennials.com)



# Restore our Bays: Applying Innovative Advanced Nitrogen Reducing Technologies to Long Island Septic Systems



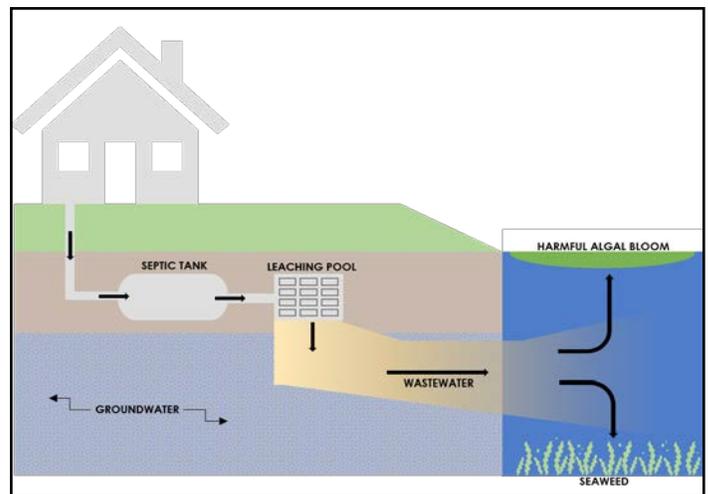
*Harmful algal bloom public notice beach closure*

Nitrogen is one of the most abundant elements in nature and is essential to life. Almost 78% of the atmosphere is comprised of the inert nitrogen gas, N<sub>2</sub>, and nitrogen can be found in every strand of a living organism's DNA. But what happens when humans add so much nitrogen to the environment that it tips the delicate balance of marine ecosystems?

In the last few decades, substantial nitrogen "loading" or nitrogen pollution has threatened native species and increased the frequency of harmful algal blooms (HABs) in the Long Island Sound. Under normal conditions, algae are harmless and essential components of the marine food web. Nitrogen acts as a food for algae, but too much nitrogen can cause algae to grow exponentially, triggering harmful toxins. This release of harmful toxins by algae is known as HABs.

Surface runoff of nitrogen-based fertilizer from residential yards and agricultural areas compounded with the direct release of nitrogen-rich raw sewage into groundwater from outdated septic systems have

exacerbated poor water quality conditions across the Sound. Along the North Shore of Nassau County, septic systems contribute more than half of nitrogen deposited in bays. Nitrogen from septic systems on the North Shore has been named the number one cause of harmful algae blooms, fish kills, thick mats of seaweed and the decline of a once-thriving shellfish industry.



*Diagram of how nitrogen travels from septic systems to ocean triggering HABs*



*New IA septic system being installed*

In 2017, Governor Cuomo announced a \$75 million fund to provide homeowners with financial incentives to replace aging septic systems. 67% of these funds have been dedicated for Suffolk County's Septic Improvement Program (SIP). Through these funds, homeowners can be eligible for a grant of up to \$10,000 to replace failing septic systems with new, nitrogen-reducing Innovative Advanced (IA) septic systems.

A conventional septic system works by draining raw sewage from a residence to a septic tank. In the septic tank, solids are settled out and liquids flow into a leaching pool or cesspool rings to distribute liquids into the ground. These nitrogen-rich liquids often flow into surrounding groundwater which transports directly into surface waterways. IA septic systems block this flow of nitrogen-rich liquids by adding a biological processing step. In new IA units, biological-processing bacteria convert harmful nitrogen found in sewage (NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>) into unreactive N<sub>2</sub> gas. IA units significantly reduce the amount of harmful nitrogen entering waterways.

Katherine Coughlin has been hired through a partnership between The Nature Conservancy and the Land Alliance, to aid homeowners in the SIP grant application process and navigation of the IA market. In this position, Kat will help to jumpstart the transition to

clean water technology as markets adjust to providing IA systems. This position was funded through an 18-month grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Long Island Sound Futures Fund.

Bays, harbors and beaches are an important part of life on Long Island. If we do not come together as a community and protect our water resources, then water quality will only get worse. Over the next few weeks, more information about the SIP grant application process will be available on the Land Alliance's website. It is time we make a change to protect our local treasures so future generations can enjoy them as well.



*Cross-section diagram of inside of IA systems*

## Water Issues Are Not Unique to Long Island: Conservation in the “River of Grass”

*“The Everglades is a test. If we pass it, we may get to keep the planet.”  
~ Marjory Stoneman Douglas, founder of Friends of the Everglades*



*The unique sawgrass, mangrove and “tree island” character of the Everglades. Photo credit: Friends of the Everglades*

Guest Author Philip Kushlan is president of Friends of the Everglades, a nonprofit dedicated to protecting, preserving and restoring the only Everglades in the world. Learn more on Facebook or at [everglades.org](http://everglades.org).

The Florida Everglades is one of the most unique ecosystems in the world. Home to the American alligator, the Florida panther and countless other endemic species, the Everglades also provides important ecosystem services to South Florida such as replenishing our freshwater aquifers and buffering us from storms and flooding.

The Everglades also face some huge challenges to its conservation. It depends on just the right amount

of fresh water flowing through the southern end of the state, in wet years and in dry years. It needs incredibly clean water, devoid of any extra nutrients, or it quickly shifts from the sawgrass dominated ecosystem the rest of the native animals depend on to a cattail dominated one.

Nature gave us the blueprint for how to keep this balance – when it rained too much, the water sheeted across the wide, flat state and the hot Florida sun evaporated the excess. When it rained too little, the porous limestone bedrock sucked up every drop and shuttled it south. The marshes between Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades took care of any excess nutrients, sequestering them as plant biomass

as the water flowed south.

But that was then. Today, in large part because of the influence of the agricultural industry, water is held back in Lake Okeechobee for irrigation purposes. Decades of pollution from stormwater and agricultural runoff north of Lake Okeechobee have resulted in massive blooms of toxic algae.

When the lake is held too high and a big storm comes, the Army Corps has no choice but to dump the water to the coasts, toxic algae or not, and that’s what happened in the summer of 2016. Our coastal estuaries and their fishing and tourism-based economies were decimated, not to mention creating a legitimate health crisis for the people living

there. These toxins have been shown to cause serious respiratory problems and there is evidence that the neurotoxins released may lead to increased instances of diseases like Parkinson's and ALS.

South of the lake, we lack the land we need for "treatment marshes" to clean the water flowing south to below the 10 ppb of phosphorus that the Everglades needs to survive. In 2018 Florida passed a plan to create a 23-foot deep reservoir south of the lake that included less than one third of the treatment marsh acreage needed to clean the water it can hold, risking us creating a new, "mini-Lake Okeechobee" in the southern end of the system.

Despite these challenges, we have a good idea of how to fix them. Nature, after all, has already provided us with the blueprint. We need to alter the Army Corps lake operations manual to send more water south in the dry season, lowering

the lake level so that if a big storm comes, the lake can simply absorb the excess water without discharging toxic algae to the coasts. For this effort to be successful, more land needs to be secured for use as treatment marshes and that takes political will. The best way to generate political will is through grass roots advocacy.

So when people ask what they can do to help solve the problem, I say they can learn about the issues, they can support organizations doing the hard policy work and they can support political candidates who are champions for the cause. But the single biggest thing they can do is to get out there and spend time in these amazing places. Go camping in Big Cypress, go kayaking along the mangrove shores, go for a full moon bike ride along Shark Alley, take a drive around Loop Road or a stroll over alligators down the Bobcat Boardwalk! Take someone who has never experienced these



*Classic tree hammock swamp in the Big Cypress National Preserve, adjacent to Everglades National Park. Photo credit: National Park Service*

magical places and post your amazing photos on social media!

The Everglades may be a very different ecosystem from Long Island's North Shore but our conservation challenges are similar. In many ways these conservation efforts are a test for all of us, and the biggest key to success is showing people the reason these places are worth saving in the first place. So, for those of you who may spend time in South Florida this winter, be sure to take a day and see for yourself what makes the Everglades so special and worth fighting for!



*Discharges of toxic algae from Lake Okeechobee through the St. Lucie river to the coast in 2016. Photo credit: Greg Lovett, Palm Beach Post*

## GOVERNMENT UPDATES



### FEDERAL Great American Outdoors Act Moves to the House

On July 22nd, in a 310-107 bipartisan vote, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA). An identical bill passed the Senate in June with a resounding 73-25 majority. The GAOA was signed by President Trump on August 4th and became public law on August 9th. Many believe this is the most important conservation legislation passed in the last 50 years! And it has been a priority for conservationists for decades.

The GAOA will dedicate \$6.65 billion over five years to addressing the \$11.9 billion backlog of maintenance projects across more than 400 national parks, monuments, recreation areas and historic sites. An additional \$2.9 billion will be used for repairs on lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Indian Education.

The GAOA will also finally fund the important Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) at the \$900 million annual rate authorized in 1964 (when President Johnson signed the bill into law). The LWCF, funded from royalty payments from offshore oil and gas drilling in federal waters, was created to both foster recreation and acquire more open space annually to supplement the nation's public lands. It also supplies grants to states to protect historic sites, steward natural areas, preserve rare species and create recreational opportunities (like ballfields, picnic areas and swimming pools). LWCF money has been used in virtually every county in the country! The Land Alliance applauds every member of Congress who voted in favor of enacting the GAOA. At a time when Americans are finding peace in nature, the GAOA will go a long way to ensuring that our natural

resources are protected and access to the outdoors is available for all.

This great outcome was the result of many years of committed efforts from conservation advocates like the Land Alliance. We are grateful to our members who made the calls and wrote the emails to help achieve this legislative victory. We have definitely been a part of ensuring that our public lands will be there for generations to come.

Unfortunately, we are not quite there yet on seeing any results. As of this writing, land acquisition lists due to Congress on November 2nd are held up in the political morass.

### Conservation Ballot Measures Across the Country

The importance of nature and the environment was evident this election as voters across the country approved more than two dozen conservation ballot measures resulting in nearly \$3.7 billion in new funding for land conservation, parks, climate resiliency and habitat.

Here are some of the most notable measures that were passed:

#### CALIFORNIA

The \$487.5 million bond in Prop A for San Francisco parks and recreation will direct \$239 million to parks and open space.

#### COLORADO

- Climate sales tax in Denver – Measure 2 will introduce a “climate sales tax,” a quarter-cent sales tax increase that is expected to generate \$720 million for a variety of climate-related programs. The measure also mandates that funding “should maximize investments in communities of color, under resourced communities and communities most vulnerable to climate change”.

- Residents in the Colorado River Water Conservation District chose to increase their property taxes to protect streams and improve water use. This measure could generate \$100 million over 20 years.



**NEW YORK STATE**  
 The 2020 Saving Mother Nature Bond Act was postponed at the last minute due to COVID-19.

**FLORIDA**

Three Florida counties will raise property taxes to pay for environmental programs.

- Residents in Volusia County voted to increase property taxes to renew the Volusia Forever land conservation program and pay for the Environmental, Cultural, Historic and Outdoor Recreation program. The measure is expected to generate \$100 million.
- Increased property taxes in Collier County are expected to raise \$287 million for the acquisition and management of environmentally sensitive lands.
- In Manatee County, a property tax increase is expected to produce \$108 million for the acquisition, improvement and management of land to protect water quality, preserve wildlife habitat and provide parks.

Marijuana initiatives passed in five states. Initiative I-190 in Montana included a provision to allocate 50% of tax proceeds from recreational marijuana sales to land conservation. The measure is expected to generate \$360 million over 20 years and is an unprecedented move for a major U.S. city.

Hopefully we will have another chance next year.

There was one local ballot measure in the State of New York. The town of New Paltz has established a Community Preservation Fund. Modelled after a successful program that has existed in the five East End towns of Long Island for decades, the New Paltz Water Quality, Working Farms, Wildlife Habitat and Natural Areas Preservation Fund creates a small real estate transfer fee on sales that exceed the median home value in the town, and directs funding generated to an account that will help the town protect affordable housing while leveraging private, state and federal dollars to conserve local forests, family farms and clean water. The measure is expected to generate more than \$3.5 million over the next 20 years. More than 70% of town voters supported this measure, which was approved as part of the November election.

Environmental bond measures tend to do extremely well in years of big voter turnout as was experienced this year.



## 2021 Walks in the Woods Preview



### **Sunday, February 21, 11:00 a.m.** **North Fork Preserve, Northville**

In partnership with Long Island Botanical Society  
Led by Eric Lamont - This extensive property contains many fascinating ecological communities. We will walk through old growth forest in the Harbor Hill Moraine and successional fields on the outwash plain.

### **Saturday, March 6, 11:00 a.m.** **East Meadow Farm, East Meadow**

In partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension – Nassau County, Led by Mary Callanan - Explore a diversity of demonstration gardens at this highly educational location. There will be a focus on the thriving arboretum started in 2013 and you may even learn some pruning techniques.

### **Saturday, April 10, 10:00 a.m.** **Fox Hollow Preserve, Laurel Hollow**

Led by Dave Taft - Enjoy this dramatic property before the trees leaf out when its native groundcovers are particularly inviting.

### **Saturday, May 1, 2:00 p.m.** **Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside**

Led by Peter Martin - This program will feature a variety of the wonders of spring, particularly shorebirds and warblers stopping over at the preserve during their migration north.

### **Saturday June 19 (Juneteenth!), 11:00 a.m.** **Red Cote Preserve, Oyster Bay Cove**

Led by Meghan Leverock - In honor of NYS Invasive Species Awareness Week come out and explore Red Cote Preserve where you will learn about invasive plants common on Long Island and how you can help prevent their spread.

### **Saturday, July 17, 10:00 a.m.** **Sisters of St. Joseph, Brentwood**

Led by Amanda Furcall - If you've never visited the Sisters' sprawling and thriving campus you are in for a treat! Amanda, landscape ecologist, will show us the grounds and introduce us to some of its inhabitants.

**Tuesday, August 24, 9:30 a.m.**

**Caumsett State Park, Lloyd Neck**

Led by Virginia Dankel - Virginia's literary walk will highlight lots of inspirational readings in addition to nature (of course!).

**Saturday, August 28, 10:00 a.m.**

**John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden and Shu Swamp, Mill Neck**

Led by Ann Lotowycz and Mary Schmutz - Learn all about iconic cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), its value to wildlife and a research project when its striking bloom marks its presence.

**Friday, September 24, 7:00 p.m.**

**Wawapek, Cold Spring Harbor**

Led by Stella Miller - Stella does the best Eastern Screech Owl call around and has a knack for enticing other owl species.

**Saturday, October 23, 10:00 a.m.**

**Cranberry Bog Preserve, Riverhead**

In partnership with Long Island Mycological Club - Led by Andy Greller - Join us at this magnificent preserve when mushrooms, cranberries in the bog and fall color make it the most beguiling time of year.

**Saturday, November 6, 11:00 a.m.**

**Roosevelt Preserve, Roosevelt**

Led by Jane Jackson, Michael Kliger and Leslie Pieters  
This is arguably the most beautiful time of year to explore Meadow Brook and Roosevelt Preserve. Take it all in as we learn about foraging and recognize the October 27th birthday of Teddy Roosevelt.

**Sunday, December 5, 11:00 a.m.**

**Cushman Woods, Matinecock**

Led by Richard Weir - Richard will lead us through this majestic tucked-away woodland and introduce us to its diverse plant community as we make our way up and down its extensive hilly trails.



Our Walks in the Woods are open to the general public. Advance registration is required! To register or for more information, please visit us online at [www.northshorelandalliance.org](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org) or contact Jane Jackson at [jjackson@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:jjackson@northshorelandalliance.org).

# Land Alliance **YOUNG EXPLORERS** Group

Perfect for ages 4-11. These walks are designed for families to learn more about the great outdoors!



## July 17th, 10:00 a.m. Shore Road Sanctuary

Come out to Shore Road Sanctuary for a nature scavenger hunt as we explore the grassland and wet meadow. We will also take a walk on the beach and see if we can find any hidden critters!

## August 14th, 10:00 a.m. Wawapek

Come and explore the forest of Wawapek as we learn about what critters call it home. After, you are invited to climb the fallen tree in the formal lawn or watch the butterflies in the pollinator garden.

## September 11th, 10:00 a.m. Humes Preserve

Meander through a meadow and see if you can count the number of butterflies present. Learn about pollination and the importance of meadows with this fun, interactive walk.

Registration is required. Register online at [www.northshorelandalliance.org/events](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org/events). Each walk is limited to 10 children. For more information, please contact Meghan Leverock at [meghan@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:meghan@northshorelandalliance.org) or call 516-922-1028.



**How long does it take to get a dose of nature high enough to make people say they feel healthy and have a strong sense of well-being? Precisely 120 minutes.**

In a study of 20,000 people, a team led by Mathew White of the European Centre for Environment & Human Health at the University of Exeter found that people who spent two hours a week in green spaces — local parks or other natural environments, either all at once or spaced over several visits — were

substantially more likely to report good health and psychological well-being than those who don't. Two hours was a hard boundary: the study, published last June, showed there were no benefits for people who didn't meet that threshold.

## The Ralf Lange Challenge Grant Moves Forward



Earlier this year we announced the establishment of a \$30,000 dollar-for-dollar matching gift challenge in honor of Ralf Lange for the establishment of a greenhouse garden at Wawapek. This challenge grant was made possible by the generosity of Ralf Lange's longtime partner, Pat Petersen, Chairman of the Board and President of Daniel Gale Sotheby's International Realty. Funds raised for this project will enable the Land Alliance to build a beautiful garden filled with pollinator attracting native plants surrounding the existing Hitchings & Co. greenhouse.

When the Land Alliance acquired the 3-acre parcel of land immediately north of Wawapek in 2015, we intended to use this part of the preserve for educational

and stewardship purposes. And, now through this wonderful gift, work towards this goal can finally begin.

Thanks to the Ralf Lange Challenge, we've begun to work with a landscape architect to develop a master plan for the greenhouse area. Our long term vision includes transforming a formal walled garden area into a gathering place for educational programs and utilizing an old greenhouse foundation as an area for raised garden beds where children can have fun, play and learn about tending plants and growing their own food. The surrounding area will be planted with native trees that will provide shade for the gathering area and the former cold frames can be restored and used to propagate and grow native plants for Wawapek, Shore Road and our other preserves.

This is a very exciting project. If all goes well, we hope to break ground in the spring of 2021. Thank you to those who have already made a gift towards the greenhouse garden match.

If you would like to learn more about the greenhouse garden project or make a donation towards the match, please contact Nina Muller at [nina@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:nina@northshorelandalliance.org) or 516-922-1028.



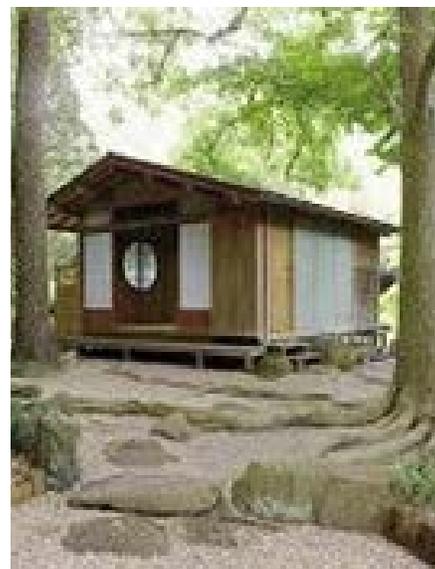
## New Grants for the Humes Property



Tavern/Humes House summer 2016



Stroll Garden tea house circa 1963



Stroll Garden tea house 2015

The Gerry Charitable Trust has generously supported the Land Alliance's efforts to protect and preserve the Humes property from the very beginning. To date they have provided \$226,500 in grants which have helped us stabilize the Tavern/Humes House along Oyster Bay Road, develop a master plan for the property and have the former estate listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The most recent \$60,000 award will fund architectural drawings for the adaptive reuse of the Tavern/Humes House as the Land Alliance's permanent offices. We are most eager to have a home on land that we own.

Lauren and Kenneth Cron have been long-time supporters of the Land Alliance. They value the benefits of being in nature and understand the importance of protecting natural areas close to home. This year the Cron Family wanted to make a special gift in support of our efforts at Humes. When they heard the tea house at the Stroll Garden was in desperate need of repair they jumped in to help. They made a gift of \$20,000 through the Cron Family Foundation which will cover the cost for repairs and maintenance. The John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden was designed by Douglas DeFaya in the 1960s after Jean and John

Humes imported a tea house from Japan and had it reconstructed by a pond in their back yard. Today, the tea house remains the focal point of the Stroll Garden.

Rosalind P. Walter became a supporter of the North Shore Land Alliance shortly after our founding in 2003. She contributed generously to our efforts to purchase and permanently protect the Humes property in Mill Neck. Roz was known for her support of public television and the humanities. More recently, her celebrity was broadened (as unveiled in her obituary) as the inspiration for the World War II song "Rosie the Riveter." We were honored to learn that Roz chose to remember the Land Alliance in her estate plans with a bequest of \$250,000. Her support allowed us to pay off our remaining debt on the John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden and will help us to begin our renovation of the Humes/Tavern House as the Land Alliance's future home.

If you would like to learn more about these projects or others that may be coming up, please contact Nina Muller at [nina@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:nina@northshorelandalliance.org) or 516-922-1028!

## Year Five of the William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil Conservation Stewards Program



*James Pizaro, Peter Markotsis and Nicole Miliano*

Thanks to a generous five-year grant from the William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil Charitable Trust, the Land Alliance launched its college intern program in May 2016. Every year the program provides students aspiring to careers in conservation opportunities to build their skill sets and knowledge base through hands-on activities. For our stewardship team, having enthusiastic and passionate interns for their busy field season means that the Land Alliance can tackle more projects in our preserves.

Our three interns this summer were Nicole Miliano, an Environmental Sustainability/Geography major at SUNY Oneonta; James Pizaro, an Environmental Studies major at Stony Brook University and Peter Markotsis, an Earth Science and Society major with a

minor in Creative Writing at Vassar College.

Over the past summer our O'Neil Stewards built new trails at the Humes Preserve, assisted with a biocontrol release of mile-a-minute weevils at Hope Goddard Iselin Preserve, installed screech owl boxes at Wawapek, tested water quality through macroinvertebrate surveys of Beaver Brook, worked alongside our dedicated volunteers on trail maintenance and storm damage cleanup and assisted with the development of a virtual Long Island Water Education Program. The O'Neil Stewards were instrumental in completing projects at many of our preserves amid a pandemic, including readying the Humes Preserve for opening to the public. We cannot thank them enough for all their hard work!!

### William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil Charitable Trust Extends Grant for O'Neil Stewards Program

The Land Alliance is excited to announce the renewal of the William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil Conservation Steward Program for the next five years. We are very grateful to the William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil Charitable Trust and Trustees John Crabill and Hollis Russell for continuing this fabulous program which both helps the Land Alliance and trains the next generation of conservation stewards.

## Roosevelt Community Garden Safely Reopens Amid COVID-19 Pandemic



*Gardeners pulling sweet potatoes during our Fall Harvest and Cleanup*



One of the best ways of dealing with stress in the times of the COVID-19 Pandemic is to get outside. On April 22nd (Earth Day), gardeners were able to enjoy a breath of fresh air and touch the soil when the Roosevelt Community Garden opened for the season. It was a pleasure to see the many smiling faces as they arrived at the Garden to help clean up, plant cool weather crops and reconnect with neighbors.

This season concluded with a Fall Harvest and Garlic Planting in November. It was a very good year, with a harvest that included 25 different types of fruits and vegetables, including callaloo, Roselle Hibiscus, eggplant, okra, bok choy, sweet potatoes, organic garlic, strawberries, flowers and ornamental gourds.

Throughout the season, the health and well-being of our gardeners and volunteers was a priority. Visitors were required to wear face masks and maintain safe distance. In addition, hand sanitizer was accessible, gardeners were encouraged to use their own tools and some activities were cancelled to minimize the number of visitors to the Garden. We also offered virtual educational presentations.

Through the Garden, we've been pleased to be able to bring healthy, locally grown food to the residents of Roosevelt and Nassau County to help combat preventable diet-related illnesses like diabetes, hypertension and obesity.





*Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County Master Gardeners Kathy Gaffney, Mary Callanan and Audrey Thomas*

We are especially grateful to our volunteers Peter Meleady, Iesha Saunders and Master Gardeners Mary Callanan, Kathy Gaffney, Charles Kaminsky and Audrey Thomas. Special thanks to Nassau County for being such a great partner by providing the space and the materials needed to achieve such a positive community impact.

**2020 programs Highlights and Activities include:**

- Partnered with Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Nassau County to host two in-person and two virtual workshops for gardeners and local residents
- Five new volunteer joined us at the Garden to help educate Garden and community members and to help maintain the Garden
- Nine new families joined the Garden to grow their own food and learn about their environment
- Two square-foot demonstration garden plots were installed by CCE to educate the community about square foot gardening
- Installed a bookshelf stocked with new books donated by the Book Fairies and a communication board

**2021 Season Preview**

**February 11th, 5:30 pm -7:00 pm  
Virtual Kick-Off Meeting and  
Annual Garden Workshop**

This event is free and open to individuals who are interested in learning more about the Garden and our educational programs for 2021.

**February 15th (Deadline is May 1st)  
Garden Plot Online Registration Begins**

If you are interested in securing a plot for the 2021 growing season, please register online at [www.northshorelandalliance.org/rcg](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org/rcg). Plots will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

**April 22nd, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm  
Annual Spring Cleanup and  
2021 Season Kick-Off (Earth Day)**

Garden members and volunteers will learn more about their environment as they help give the Garden a spring cleaning in preparation for the season. Volunteers needed!

For more programs or information about the Garden, visit [www.northshorelandalliance.org/rcg](http://www.northshorelandalliance.org/rcg) or contact Andrea Millwood at [andrea@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:andrea@northshorelandalliance.org) or 516-922-1028.

## Long Island Water Education Program Going Virtual



As of March 11th this year, our Long Island Water Education Program (LIWEP), launched in 2014, had reached over 7,500 youngsters across Long Island – all in person – both in the classroom and at our Shore Road Sanctuary field trip. Soon the program will be entering the classroom in a new way: virtually. Our expert educator, Karen Mossey, is working with our classroom teachers and worked with O’Neil Stewards interns over the summer. She also is having her own children in starring roles of upper elementary school students, is developing lessons in the form of a “story map”. The story map will teach kids about where their drinking water comes from (underground) and the link between land conservation and protecting our water resources. In addition, our O’Neil Stewards 2020, in consultation with Mrs. Mossey, created a LIWEP field trip guide that will be accessible through our website for use by both LIWEP students and Shore Rd. Sanctuary visitors. Our goal is to pilot the virtual program with at least two school districts in late fall/early winter.

Mrs. Mossey, whose own family is facing the challenges of remote learning, is well aware of the necessity of maintaining LIWEP’s hands-on format. She is determined to keep her lessons interactive. Thanks to funding from Scotts Miracle-Gro and Rauch Foundations, each student enrolled in the program will

receive a set of materials to:

- demonstrate the amount of the world’s fresh water available to drink
- measure Long Island’s annual precipitation
- build an aquifer model
- pollute our drinking water! and
- create permeable and impermeable surfaces and measure runoff from both

Students will also continue to learn, as they do on the field trip, about Shore Road’s natural resources and communities and their benefits to local wildlife and our water.

One silver lining (of so many pandemic silver linings!) to our current situation is that our new programming will be available, via YouTube and our website, to not only our LIWEP students but to families at home and visiting Shore Road Sanctuary.

We strongly prefer onsite learning. But we hope that, even if Mrs. Mossey will not be able to physically return to the classroom for a time, students will return to Shore Road sometime in 2021 to:

- sprint across the lawn as a pollinator under threat in our pollinator game
- lift rocks at the shoreline in a hunt for Asian shore crabs
- taste the salt secreted by salt marsh cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) and
- harvest Indian grass seed to spread among the grassland

We all need to be outside, especially children, and look forward to the day when we can all be together again.

To learn more about our Long Island Water Education Program, please visit our website at <https://northshorelandalliance.org/long-island-water-education> or contact us at 516-922-1028.

## The Season at Shore Road – Switchgrass Planting



One of the invasive plant species that has captured both our attention and time in recent years is crown vetch (*Coronilla varia*). Crown vetch has been particularly problematic at Shore Road. During visits there, you may have noticed large sheets of unsightly black plastic covering the ground near the entrance.

The plastic was installed after we removed the plant by hand to discourage regrowth from underground rhizomes. We knew it was just a matter of time before the crown vetch would creep (or gallop!) back.

After a couple of seasons of removal and “tarping” with plastic, we were able to plant areas where the crown vetch had not yet returned with a plant that would give it a run for its money - switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*). We started with 250 switchgrass plugs last year. This October, we called upon our many volunteers to participate in a massive planting event at the grassland. This time we installed 1,000 switchgrass plugs where the crown vetch had been so pervasive.

Switchgrass at Shore Road is perhaps the most aggressive and well-established of the four warm

season grass species that were seeded there in 2011 (though the other three [Indian grass, little bluestem and big bluestem]) are all doing well now. We are very grateful to the two dozen volunteers who came out over the course of three days to get the job done and would like to convey a special thanks to the Grenville Baker Boys & Girls Club.

The Grenville Baker Boys & Girls Club and the North Shore Land Alliance normally partner for an Earth Day celebration. Due to the circumstances this year, we pushed the event to October for the switchgrass planting as well as a beach cleanup that was carried out as part of the annual International Coastal Cleanup. The group split up into teams of two to collect trash and found over sixty pounds of trash on our shoreline. At the planting that followed, the Club presented the North Shore Land Alliance with funds it had raised to help contribute to protecting open space and maintaining water quality. Many thanks to the Club for all its help at Shore Road Sanctuary and for its fundraising efforts! We greatly appreciate its dedication to protecting our community.

## Volunteers for Open Space



North Shore Land Alliance volunteers spend time at our preserves and assist with community outreach events and our office needs. In this issue of *Conservation News*, we would like to highlight several events for which we were particularly dependent on our volunteers who came to our rescue once again:

- **Tropical Storm Isaias Cleanup:** Isaias wrought more havoc at our preserves than any event since Superstorm Sandy. We would not have been able to clean up storm debris and damage our preserves sustained without ongoing help from our wonderful volunteers. Special thanks and shoutouts to the many volunteers who have helped, especially: Ken Krumenacker, Joel Shaw, Richard Kopsco, Max Willard, Paul Silchenstedt, Rob Weissman, Meg Weissman, Gianna Murphy and Sabrina Rezk.
- **Beaver Brook Corridor Trails and Cleanup:** Before the official opening of the Humes Preserve, we needed to create trails connecting the Humes Preserve to Shu Swamp and the Beaver Brook Connector Parcel to Upper Francis Pond. Volunteers prepared these areas by collecting debris and removing invasive species, then assisted with building a viable trail for future visitors to utilize.

- **S.T.A.T.E. Screech Owl Box Installation:** The Land Alliance partnered with Students Taking Action for Tomorrow's Environment (S.T.A.T.E., now known as Nature Initiative) to provide an opportunity for local high school students to work with the environmental community. In February and March, S.T.A.T.E. members worked with volunteer Marty Wenz to make screech owl boxes for Wawapek. Eastern Screech Owls nest in tree cavities (formed by woodpeckers, fungus, rot or squirrels) and readily nest in bird boxes with openings of a comparable size.
- **Staff Volunteer Days:** For a conservation organization, work in the office can get old on a beautiful day. This past spring, the entire office joined our stewardship staff at the Humes Preserve and Wawapek to remove invasive plants and debris and conduct a spring cleaning of Wawapek's pollinator garden and blueberry enclosure. Experiences such as these provide a great way for staff to connect over a shared mission.

Many thanks to all our volunteers for their many contributions!



## Volunteer Spotlights

**Sofi Solomon**, one of our favorite O’Neil Stewards alumnae, returned to the Land Alliance this summer to volunteer her time and expertise at the John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden. Always smiling and cheerful, Sofi helped to maintain the Garden’s beauty by grooming moss, weeding and performing other maintenance activities unique to the Stroll Garden. We wish her well as she begins her first year at Fordham Law School this fall.

**Ben Kolitch**, while more accustomed to the sights and sounds of New York City, immersed himself in the peace and calm of our preserves this summer. As a preserve steward, Ben learned a lot about flora and fauna (and invasive plants) as he weed-whacked his way through overgrown vegetation and maintained trails. Ben spread his

good works throughout our Humes, Cushman Woods and Hope Goddard Iselin Preserves.

**Daria Hokun**, a long-time, dedicated volunteer, wore multiple hats this summer! Initially active in the Stroll Garden, she expanded her volunteer roles to include designing helpful collateral materials (including a “how to” guide for recommended dress for stewardship activities) and continued to lend a hand at stewardship and fundraising events. She is currently assisting with the design of the future nature play area at the Humes Preserve.

**Amelia Medved**, a Fordham Honors Intern Fellow, assisted the Land Alliance this summer through a somewhat virtual fellowship. She was able to learn the ins and outs of a non-profit

land trust via Zoom meetings with Land Alliance staff and joined us, on occasion, outside for stewardship volunteer days at Humes and Cushman Woods. Amelia’s main project was to design interpretative trail signs highlighting the natural, historical and cultural resources found at Cushman Woods, which she executed beautifully. This experiment with a virtual internship proved that the Land Alliance could provide an insightful learning environment via Zoom but, in the end, there is really nothing like a hands-on outdoor experience!

Many thanks to Sofi, Ben, Daria and Amelia for all their hard work and contributions to the Land Alliance in our local conservation efforts.

## New Trustees

### Patsy Randolph Mayer



Patsy's involvement with the North Shore Land Alliance began in 2003 as one of the founding members. Her early contributions were many including creating and launching the annual wine auction dinner (with the help of her friends), encouraging and working with then County Executive Thomas Suozzi in support of the first ever Nassau County open space bond and serving as a trustee for many years. After a move to Florida, Patsy has relocated back to the North Shore to continue her good works.

Her volunteer roles have included Chairman of the North Country Garden Club Conservation Committee, Chairman of The Garden Club of America Zone III (New York State) Conservation Committee and Subject Vice Chairman for the National Affairs and Legislation Committee covering water. Currently, she is President of the Grass River Garden Club and President of the Florida Coalition for Preservation, a non-profit committed to protecting South Florida's barrier island from over development and to preserve its waterways. Patsy's career began as a staffer for United States Senator Jacob K. Javits. She later worked for the John Hay Whitney and Rauch Foundations.

### Frank O'Keefe



Frank O'Keefe founded Carbon Sink Inc. in 2014--a company focused on negative emissions applications of direct air capture technology.

Prior to starting Carbon Sink Frank spent 28 years in finance with Bankers Trust Company, J.P. Morgan, and Zurich Capital Markets

before starting his own firm focused on hedging strategies in 1999. He wrote the novel *Skating to Vietnam*, and formerly served on the Board of the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

He lives in Lloyd Harbor with his wife and three children.

### Claudia Overstrom



Claudia Taylor Overstrom is the Co-Founder of Eponymous New York, a luxury handbag company founded in 2012. Prior to starting Eponymous, Claudia practiced entertainment law at Loeb & Loeb, was a Vice Pres-

ident at NBC in its digital media venture capital group and ran the business side of STYLE.com (a joint venture between Conde Nast and Fairchild Media that was the precursor to VOGUE.com).

Claudia has served on a number of charitable boards

and currently serves on the Administrative Board of the Society of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and the Women's Board of the Boys' Club of New York, as well as on the board of the Gracie Square-River Corporation. Claudia also has been an active volunteer at her children's schools.

Claudia is a graduate of Yale University and Georgetown Law School. Claudia and her husband, Gunnar, partnered with the Land Alliance in the acquisition of Cushman Woods. They have two children and have recently made our community the primary residence for their family.

## Paul Vermynen, Trustee



Paul was born in Brooklyn and grew up in NJ loving summers on the North Shore of Long Island. He graduated from Georgetown and Columbia Business School. He moved to NYC with his wife, Robin, and began a business career with Citibank in 1971. After three years in Texas with Commonwealth Oil, Paul, Robin and their four children moved to Lloyd Harbor in 1982. Paul organized the acquisition of Meenan Oil Co. and served as president until its sale in 2001. In 2004 Paul founded Kestrel Energy Partners and since

2006 has served as Chairman of Star Group, a multi-state distributor of heating oil and propane.

Paul and Robin split their time among NYC, Lloyd Harbor and Southwest Harbor, Maine. Paul's numerous community commitments have included service as President of Huntington Arts Council and of SPLIA (now Preservation Long Island) He has served on the board of Public Preparatory Network, Bronx, NY since its founding in 2004. He also organized the maintenance of Matheson Meadows on Lloyd Neck for years, now under Land Alliance management.

## New Staff

### Katherine Coughlin, *Water Quality Improvement Coordinator*



Originally from Syracuse, NY, Katherine “Kat” Coughlin graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Geoscience from Hobart and William Smith Colleges (2016) and continued to complete a Master of Science in Hydrology from the University of Virginia (2018). Coughlin wrote her master's thesis on the harm that invasive species cause to the nitrogen cycle. After graduate school, Coughlin went on to work as an environmental engineer at Dresdner Robin, a civil engineering firm in Jersey City, NJ. At Dresdner Robin, she oversaw the decommissioning and environmental cleanup of the Hudson Generating Station – the United States' second most toxic coal-fired power plant.

At the North Shore Land Alliance, Kat will assist Long Island homeowners with navigating New York State's new Septic System Improvement Program (SIP). Having grown up on the Finger Lakes in Upstate New York, Coughlin understands the importance of balancing agricultural and industrial needs with environmental conservation. She has seen firsthand the effect harmful algal blooms, fish kill, and invasive species can have on normally pristine water. As an undergraduate, Coughlin studied the effect of nitrogen pollution from agricultural runoff and residential septic systems on the Finger Lakes' water quality. To Coughlin, it was deeply gratifying to work with local communities to create clean-water solutions without sacrificing livelihoods.

In her free time, Kat likes exploring NYC restaurants with her fiancé, James, and bringing her newly adopted dog on long walks through her Bayside neighborhood. Kat loves playing lacrosse, rock climbing, and is currently training to run her first marathon.

## Open Space Society – Humes Picnic



Traditionally the Open Space Society Dinner is held in early spring at a private residence. This year due to the pandemic it took on a different look and became an elegant summer picnic held at the soon to be opened Humes Preserve. On Saturday, July 25th guests enjoyed a lovely evening of jazz, cocktails and a distanced (yet intimate) dinner overlooking the Suzanne and Carter Bales Quiet Meadow.

Guests, seated at their tables, were treated to a visit by a doe and buck observing curiously from the far side of the meadow. This siting provided a good reminder

of why we protect wonderful natural places like the Humes Preserve.

This was the Land Alliance's first fundraising event of the year and despite the pandemic it was a financial success. Special thanks to Land Alliance Board Chair Hoyle Jones and his wife, Botsy, for their generous event sponsorship and to the trustees and friends of the Land Alliance who ventured out, some for the first time since the pandemic arrived, in support of the Land Alliance's local conservation efforts.



## Thank you to all who attended and supported this event.

### Special thanks to our generous sponsors

Lori and Roger Bahnik, the Bahnik Foundation, Botsy and Hoyle Jones

### Patrons

Constance Cincotta, Marilyn Cunniff, Richard Cunniff Jr., Alexandra and Philip Howard  
Ragnar and Lauren Knutsen, Carol and Jim Large, Sarah and Charles Morgan  
William C. and Joyce C. O'Neil Charitable Trust, Hollis Russell and William Crabill, Trustees  
Nancy Taylor



## Endowment Building for Organizational Sustainability

The Land Alliance was fortunate to hear Meryl Cosentino, Executive Director of Gift Planning at NY University and President Emeritus of the Philanthropic Planning Group of Greater New York (PPGGNY), speak about gift planning. She shared several insights about year-end charitable giving and important information about the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) and the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act (SECURE Act) which we thought might be of interest to you.

The CARES ACT includes two legislative provisions designed to encourage charitable giving in 2020. The first allows for the deduction of up to \$300 in giving per individual this year, whether that individual itemizes their taxes or not. The second lightens the load on those who itemize in 2020 by lifting the cap for deductions relative to adjusted gross income.

Under the SECURE Act, the minimum age for the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your tax-deferred retirement account was raised from 70½ to 72. However, the CARES Act temporarily suspended the RMD for 2020, regardless of your age.

If you are over 70 ½ years old or older, making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a great option to lower your income taxes while helping the Land Alliance.

The Land Alliance depends on year-end gifts to help us fulfill our mission. If you are interested in exploring giving opportunities, please contact Nina Muller at 516-922-1028 or [nina@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:nina@northshorelandalliance.org).

## Family Days at Humes Preserve



We hosted a series of small, pre-opening friends and family events at the Humes Preserve over three days in late August. Guests were invited in small groups to quietly celebrate our community's newest public space. Activities included a 5K walk or run, a guided nature walk through the wooded trails, a kids nature hunt with arts and crafts and/or a workout in the newly

constructed fitness area with Land Alliance friend and local trainer, Carl Wermee. It was a lovely day to be together in the safety of the outdoors. Thank you to all who came, contributed and supported the Land Alliance in this new endeavor. A good time was had by all as evidenced in these wonderful pictures.





## Our Holiday Wish List

With the help of many of our friends, we've made great progress at the Humes Preserve. The transformation has been amazing, yet our work there is never really done. If this has been a financially good year and you would like to help in the effort, here's our "Wish List". Please call us at 516-922-1028 if any of these projects interest you.

- 1. Adirondack Chair for the meadow's edge**  
Donation: \$650 each (six chairs needed)
- 2. Hammock for chilling in the shade**  
Donation: \$1,000 each (two hammocks needed)
- 3. Pink Dogwood tree for the entry allee**  
Donation: \$1,000 each (Eight trees needed)
- 4. Picnic table with benches for the family picnic area**  
Donation: \$3,500 each (two needed)
- 5. Golf Cart for watering trees, transporting tools and tired people**  
Donation: \$4,000
- 6. Woodland buffer of native shrubs**  
Donation: \$5,000 (60 shrubs included)
- 7. Meadow garden benches so you can watch the grasses grow**  
Donation: \$10,000
- 8. Phase two of the Meadow – Planting of a quarter acre along the meadow's edge with native grasses and wildflowers**  
Donation: \$10,000
- 9. Native fern and woodland garden area to inspire others to plant native species**  
Donation: \$12,000

## Annual Golf & Tennis Outing



This year's Golf & Tennis Outing took place on Wednesday, October 14th at Piping Rock Club on a beautiful fall day. Our golfers enjoyed a buffet breakfast on the main clubhouse patio followed by a warm-up on the driving range before heading out to their respective holes for a shotgun start.

Jaguar Land Rover Glen Cove was again our Hole-in-One sponsor, offering a 24-month prepaid lease on a 2020 Range Rover Velar, which unfortunately did not make it home this year with any of our guests.

We had a great turnout for our tennis event as well, which began with a 30-minute warm-up with the pros followed by a co-ed round robin tournament.

The players, some joined by family and friends, then gathered on the main clubhouse lawn for a distanced, outdoor luncheon. Hoyle Jones and Lisa

Ott acknowledged this year's Outing Honorees, Hope and John Reese and Phyllis and Brad Weekes, for their tireless commitments to protecting our open space and contributing significantly to the history of our community and the preservation of its natural resources.

Thank you to Piping Rock Club for yet another seamless outing. Thank you to Holderness & Bourne for underwriting our golf prizes. Thank you to our golf Co-Chairs, Jack Foley and Bryan McMillen, and tennis Co-Chairs, Mary and Russell Selover. And a special, heartfelt thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, the Ike, Molly and Steven Elias Foundation and all other sponsors, underwriters and supporters.

To sponsor our 2021 Golf & Tennis Outing, contact Liz Swenson at [liz@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:liz@northshorelandalliance.org) or 516-922-1028.



## Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors

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### Event Underwriters

Chi and Ferrell McClean, Claudia and Gunnar Overstrom, *Golf and Tennis Breakfasts*  
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Holderness & Bourne, *Golf Prizes*

## Young Professionals Annual Cocktail and Fundraiser

Nearly 30 people ventured out on a crystal-clear evening at the end of August this year to attend the annual Heritage Committee party. We were told by many of our guests that it was the first event they had attended in many months! Courtney and Andrew Geisel generously hosted the socially responsible party outdoors in the garden of their home in Locust Valley. Guests enjoyed cocktails, individually presented hors d'oeuvres, live jazz and a small silent auction that included offerings like a half-day boat rental donated by Long Island Boat Rentals. The Heritage Committee party is typically held in New York City, but many of the event spaces in the Big Apple were closed this summer due to COVID-19.

The Heritage Committee of the North Shore Land Alliance is a community of bright and energetic young professionals from Long Island and New York City that was started about 15 years ago by loyal Land Alliance supporter D.R. Holmes, Max Stenbeck, Tim

DiPietro and John O'Kane. This under 40-year-old group shares a common bond of loving nature and knowing that their action is critical to protecting it for future generations. The Committee is working to ensure that the next generation understands the importance of land conservation and its relationship to clean air, clean water, our local food source and climate change mitigation at local, regional and global levels. Throughout the year, the Committee organizes one or two friend-raisers to educate more young professionals about the work of the Land Alliance, to meet other like-minded individuals and to find ways they can enrich our communities.

To get involved in the Land Alliance's Young Professionals Committee, contact Jennifer Einhorn at [jeinhorn@northshorelandalliance.org](mailto:jeinhorn@northshorelandalliance.org) or 516-922-1028.

## Looking Back at the Heritage Committee Through the Years



# Flora, Fauna and Fortitude

## Wine Auction Weekend



This year's wine auction turned into a weekend-long event with a series of small outdoor celebrations organized over three days. We could not have been happier to be out and socially distancing with our loyal supporters and great friends.

Friday kicked off the weekend at Groton Place, Julie and Luis Rinaldini's beautiful 108-acre Old Westbury horse farm. Two separate Argentine asado dinners took place in two different locations on the property. James Muir, an Argentinian himself, cooked up a true experience in the courtyard of the horse stable, while Sterling Affair Caterers brought in their own authentic spread at the lower party alongside the paddocks.

Each dinner offered a large selection of meats on an open grill, with sides including burrata, smoked fingerling potatoes and plancha grilled vegetables, all served with Spanish wines. Dinner tables were adequately spread out and nestled under strands of bistro lights. The open-flamed grills became center

stage. Miniature horses and polo ponies joined the party from their surrounding stalls and pastures. Bales of hay with saddle pads for seating were scattered around the classic Argentinian guitarists, while red fleece blanket giveaways and small fire pits throughout kept the guests warm on what turned out to be a crisp but beautiful fall night. Thank you to our friends Tom McGrath and Peter Bahr for their amazing live auctioneer skills which, along with the silent and wine auctions, helped us exceed our evening's goals!

Saturday's event, on another perfect night, took place on the terrace of Seawanhaka Corinthian Yacht Club with incredible views overlooking the bay. With a more nautical theme, table cards in the shape of fish hung from hooks for guests to take as they entered. The florals were a mix of light and dark blues with shades of pink spread in, and navy bow-tied fleece blankets were given out for guests to keep warm. It was a great evening full of energy that ended around a bonfire with socially distanced music from local friends Will

Dick and Gabe Jostrom. Thank you to our talented auctioneer, Larry Schmidlapp, for also exceeding our expectations and making this night such a huge success!

Our weekend concluded with a luncheon at Piping Rock Club to commemorate Women in Conservation. There could be no better person to represent this than our guest speaker, Paula Youngs Weir. Paula delivered a truly fascinating presentation on the history of Youngs Farm and its evolution, leading up to today's generation of women - Abby, Remsen and their families – whom she credits with continuing and expanding the successful family business. In line with our theme, Paula's presentation also touched on the 100th anniversary of a woman's right to vote, and how this historic movement

shaped our community and what it is today.

Thank you so much to everyone who came to each event, trusted us and supported us in this unprecedented year. We couldn't have imagined a better outcome. Thank you to Botsy and Hoyle Jones as Presenting Sponsor, and their endless support in our mission to preserve and protect our land and water resources. Thank you to the Rinaldinis, Seawanhaka and Piping Rock Club for making these events so safe and seamless. Lastly, we are grateful to our incredible Co-Chairs Allison and Jay Aston, Kate and Chad Doerge, Jenna Bush Hager and Henry Hager, Amory and Sean McAndrew and Claudia and Gunnar Overstrom for their help in making this such a memorable weekend.

A decorative border surrounds the central text area. On the left, there are yellow and orange flowers with green stems and buds. On the right, there are blue and brown butterflies, one of which is perched on a yellow flower. At the bottom, there are green leaves and red flowers. The background of the central area is a light yellow color.

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## Thank You to Our Generous Wine Auction Donors



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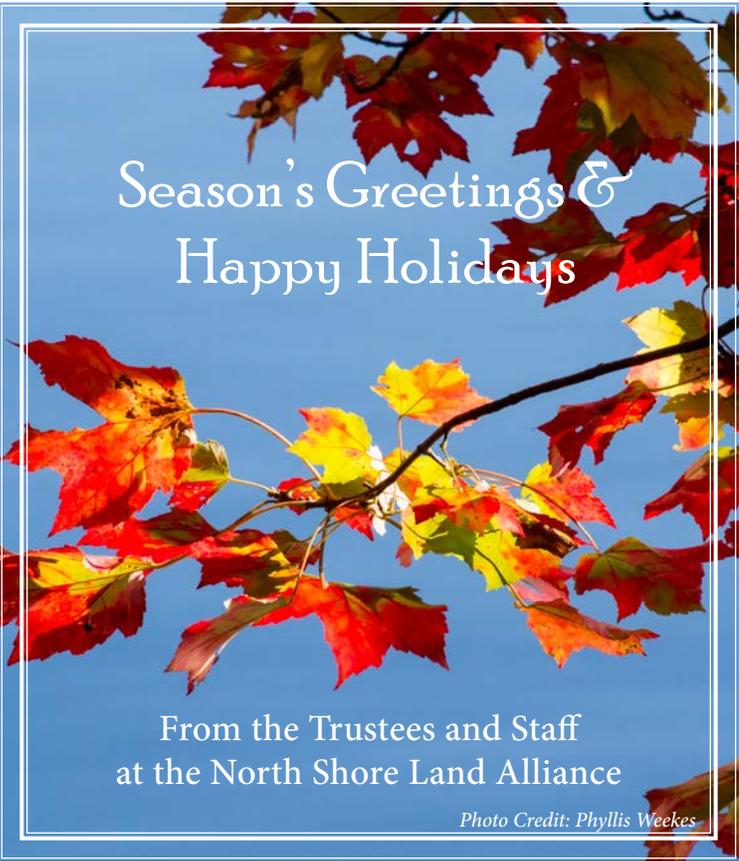


# NORTH SHORE LAND ALLIANCE

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The North Shore Land Alliance is a nationally accredited, 501(C) (3) non-profit land trust formed to protect and preserve, in perpetuity, the green spaces, farmlands, wetlands, groundwater and historical sites of Long Island's north shore for the enhancement of quality of life and benefit of future generations.



Season's Greetings &  
Happy Holidays

From the Trustees and Staff  
at the North Shore Land Alliance

*Photo Credit: Phyllis Weekes*

## 2021 SAVE THE DATES

**Annual Golf & Tennis Outing**  
**Wednesday, May 5th**  
Piping Rock Club, Locust Valley

**Annual Wine Auction and Dinner**  
**Saturday, September 25th**  
Location to Be Announced

Event dates and times are subject to change.  
For more event details, please visit our website  
or contact Liz Swenson at 516-922-1028.



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