



GENESEE VALLEY CONSERVANCY

May 2004

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GVC Accepts One New Conservation Easement in 2003

The Genesee Valley Conservancy increased its protected land by 125 acres in 2003. The Seven Nations Stakes, Inc., a Wadsworth family partnership donated a conservation easement on an additional section of their "Oxbow Farm". In 1995 the family donated a conservation easement on 550 acres of this parcel, located in the town of Avon on Nations Road and Oxbow Lane. The 2003 donation continues the conservation of this farm.

"At the time [1995], for tax reasons, we were not ready to commit to conserving the entire parcel, so we decided to conserve the property in stages" said family member Sally Wood. The 2003 easement completes the conservation of the part of the farm that is south of Oxbow Lane. There remains additional acreage north of the Lane not yet conserved.

This conservation easement protects important agricultural land, hardwood forests and some very scenic pasture land. The pasture land, commonly known as the "Brady Lot", is recognizable by its picturesque barn that sits on the west side of Nations Road.

With this addition, GVC protects additional land in the South Avon area. The parcel is bound on all sides by other conserved properties, including additional land owned by Seven Nations, and "Tadmor Farm" currently owned by Mike and Ann Bishop. The conservation easement was donated by the then owner Benson Jones, who subsequently moved sold the property to the Bishops. As with all conservation easements held by GVC, the property remains protected even after the easement donor no longer holds title to the property.

GVC now protects well over 7,400 acres, including approximately five miles of Nations Road frontage.

"It is quite remarkable what this organization has accomplished in the last decade," said Executive Director, Eric Grace. "People realize that this community has something very special to offer, and are 100% committed to protecting this for future generations."

As for other conservation projects, Mr. Grace stated that he is currently working with several landowners. However, it is still too early to discuss these specifics. He is also very excited about an area-wide conservation project that is being initiated.

GVC Welcomes 27 New Members

The Conservancy has seen a dramatic increase of new members joining the organization and supporting its mission through the donation of time and money. The 28 new members constitute close to a 7% increase in membership, greatly aiding GVC in its fundraising goals.

"We're tremendously pleased with the additional memberships", said Myrt Merritt, Director of the Development Committee. "People realize that the Conservancy is an organization that is really doing good work in the community, and they are showing their support".

"I personally welcome and thank the new members", said Bill Lloyd, GVC's President. "It is heartening to know that we are impacting so many people, in such a positive way".

GVC the Recipient of a \$4,500 Grant from the Land Trust Alliance, Northeast Program

The Genesee Valley Conservancy was recently awarded a \$4,500 grant from the Land Trust Alliance's Northeast program. The grant is for building the capacity of the Genesee Valley Conservancy to increase its land protection and to strengthen the stewardship of land currently protected.

"If you look at the remarkable progress that GVC has accomplished to date, it only makes sense that we need to take stock of where we are, and how to increase our conservation programs to meet the challenges facing us in the future," said GVC Director Eric Grace.

The first phase of the project entails peer-to-peer review of the organization by other land trusts that have undergone the significant changes currently facing GVC. This will include in-depth discussions with board members and the staff, and a review of current land protection programs employed by GVC.

The second phase of the project will be to send four or five board members to the annual Land Trust Rally in October. This gathering of over 1,700 land conservationists focuses on all aspects of operating a non-profit, land conservation organization.

Lastly, the grant will sponsor meetings between the Genesee Valley Conservancy and the Genesee Land Trust (another land conservation organization, based in Rochester.) This series of gatherings is aimed at exploring the similarities and potential partnership possibilities between the two organizations to reduce unnecessary duplication of efforts and further increase the capacity of both organizations.

This program is funded in part by the New York State Conservation Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program with support from the State of New York.

GVC Sponsors Series of Nature Walks

This summer GVC will host a series of nature walks. Led by local experts, these trips aim to educate and inspire our members about the natural world in which we live. Please come prepared to spend an hour or so wandering some of the beautiful landscapes of the area and learn about what makes this such a special place. All of these walks are free.

May 9 - Bluebells 3:00 PM. Come on a tour of the magnificent Bluebells. (*Note: we will try to provide transportation as close to the Bluebell site as possible, depending on the dryness of the ground. However, this walk may entail several miles of hiking. Bring a water bottle and good shoes.*) Meet at the Culvert Bridge on Nations Road, Geneseo.

June 19 - Bird Walk 8:00 AM. Meet at the Culvert Bridge on Nations Road, Geneseo.

July 24 - Butterfly Walk 10:00 AM. Meet at the Culvert Bridge on Nations Road, Geneseo.

August 29 - Tree Walk 3:00 PM. Meet at the Kennels, one mile west on Roots Tavern Road, Geneseo.

For questions or more detailed directions, please contact Eric Grace (585) 243-2190.

GVC Picnic June 27, with APOG

Mark your calendar for this year's GVC picnic, Sunday, June 27 at 5:00 PM. This year the picnic will be held at Meg and Bill Lloyd's Culvert Farm, located on Nations Road one mile west of Rt. 39 (Avon-Geneseo road) in the town of Geneseo.

As always, the picnic is free to members. Non-members are welcome for \$15. Invitations to follow in May. Non-members can call Eric Grace at the Conservancy office for tickets.

The picnic is being held in conjunction with the Association for the Preservation of Geneseo House Tour. The tour features many historic buildings and residences in Geneseo (including the GVC office at One Main Street). Tickets for the tour are available for \$15.00 presale at Pictures and Presents and B & D Framing, both located on Main Street, Geneseo. Tickets are available the day of the tour at the log cabin in the Geneseo Village Park for \$20.00. All proceeds go towards the APOG "Schoolhouse Project". For more information on the house tour, please contact **Liz Porter at 243-2231**.

Genesee Valley Hunt Races No Longer GVC Benefit

Since 1994 the Genesee Valley Hunt Races have been run for the benefit of the Genesee Valley Conservancy. This has been a wonderful relationship, and the revenues generated from the races have contributed significantly to the Conservancy. GVC now protects close to 7,500 acres of land, including all the land used for the Races, as well as much additional farmland, wetlands, forests, wildlife habitat and important scenic areas. All this land is now permanently protected; it will remain as open space, free of development, forever.

As the Races grew, GVC was increasingly burdened by the the scope of commitment. With the downturn of the economy in 2001 much of the corporate funding ended. We weathered this storm for several years, attempting to fill the funding gap with new corporate sponsorship. However, this was an uphill battle.

As a consequence, GVC and The Genesee Valley Hunt have agreed to remove the Conservancy as the beneficiary of the races. The Hunt has agreed to take over the operations and management of the Races, with Austin Wadsworth remaining as Chairman of the Race Committee.

The Genesee Valley Conservancy will continue to pursue land conservation in hunt country and beyond. Both GVC and the Hunt realize the tremendous need for additional conservation to protect the important open spaces of the region. Relieved of the responsibility of running the Races, GVC can now focus its time and efforts on the extremely important task of preserving more land.

To all GVC members who dedicated time, energy, money and excitement to the event, thank you for your loyal support. Without your graciousness, the races could not have developed into the best steeplechasing in the country. We especially thank Pat Richardson, Race Administrator, and the entire race committee for remarkable leadership in seeing the advancement of the races to the level at which they are now.

And remember, the Races will be held this year on Saturday, October 9. For additional information, call 243-4218.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill Lloyd, *President*, Ted Kinsey, *Vice-President*, Sally Wood, *Treasurer*, Louis D'Amanda, *Secretary*,

John W. Chanler, Oliver Chanler, June Batzing, Bruce Donnan, Gregg Hartvigsen, Helge Heen, Dean Jewett, Benson Jones, Myrtle Merritt, Jeff Mulligan, Joseph C. O'Dea, Craig Phelps, Sharon Presutti, Frank Schirmer, Corrin Strong, Martha D. Wadsworth

Eric W. Grace, *Executive Director*

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GVC Sponsors Gloria Betlem for GVCA Grants Award

The Genesee Valley Conservancy, in conjunction with local artist Gloria Betlem, was recently awarded a Community Arts Grant, administered by the Genesee Valley Council on the Arts, to host a series of instructional workshops led by Ms. Betlem, focused on natural landscape painting techniques using pastels, oils and other mediums.

This grant, funded in part by the New York State Council on the Arts Decentralized Regrant program, is administered by the Genesee Valley Council on the Arts, and is aimed at increasing community involvement in the arts. GVC is honored to be the Sponsor for Gloria Betlem, as we realize that the arts play a vital role in strengthening a community.

The following is a schedule of the instructional workshops. Call Gloria Betlem, **585-346-9499** for information and workshop registration.

May 22 1-5 PM

Studio Open House - Jack Evans Community Center, Main Street Hemlock.

Presentations by Genesee Valley Conservancy Executive Director, Eric Grace, and artist, Gloria Betlem, describing their recent Decentralization grant project, The Natural Landscape of Livingston County, Also; "Oil Pastels And Soft Pastels" - a brief presentation describing the various properties of each medium.

May 29 1-5 PM

Oil Pastel Techniques

Betlem Art Studio - Jack Evans Community Center, Main St. Hemlock
A workshop exploring the various techniques and expressions using oil pastels
\$40

June 11 1-5 PM

Pastel Techniques Workshop

Gloria Betlem's gardens, South Lima
A workshop exploring the various techniques and expressions of the pastel medium.
\$40

June 12 10-5 PM

Pastel Painting In The Iris Gardens

A workshop in Gloria's Iris Gardens using pastels or oil pastels. Instruction and individual attention given to all participants, with a focus on expressing the color and form of the flowers and other aspects of the gardens.
\$50

June 25 10-5 PM

Letchworth State Park

A workshop exploring the unique qualities of nature presented in a selected area of the park. Artists of all levels will begin with suggested drawing studies and then work in their chosen medium. Instruction and individual attention given to all participants.
\$50

July 17 10-5 PM

Wheeler's Gully

A workshop exploring the unique qualities of this beautiful gully with 30-foot waterfalls. You can choose to work in the quiet areas by the stream or hike back to the falls. Artists of all levels will begin with suggested drawing studies and then work in their chosen medium. Instruction and individual attention given to all participants
\$50

August 7 10-5 PM

Pastel Painting On Hemlock Lake

Open your heart to the rare, pristine beauty of this seven-mile long finger lake resting between tree covered hills, where an old growth forest hosts trees over 400 years old, and the American bald eagle nests. Explore the shores and express them creatively in pastel. Instruction and individual attention given to all participants.
\$50

November date TBA

Art Exhibition: The Natural Landscape Of Livingston County
Sundance Books, Geneseo

A Winter Essay

Oliver Chanler, GVC Board Member

In recent months, global warming wasn't on the minds of very many of us who live here in the sub-Arctic area of western New York. After January third, the day the temperature hit sixty-one degrees, we went into deep freeze mode. For the rest of the month and into February, temperatures sometimes soared to single digit highs, or maybe even into the low teens. A couple of times it may have hit twenty-two degrees, making the day feel positively balmy. In the winter of 2004, about six new records were set for cold, one of them reportedly for the coldest day ever recorded for the area.

So what did we do? Most of us hunkered down, looking out the windows at the frozen landscape mounded over in snow. Open space? Well, it's a nice concept, but it seemed just too cold to do anything out there. Closed, warm spaces seemed the ideal. After a while, however, indoors became just too confining. Had to get out. Had to do something. Open space did beckon.

There we were, gliding across the open spaces, all white and starkly beautiful, dogs frolicking with great glee, bounding through the deep snow until they tired and fell in behind us where our ski tracks provided easier passage.

As cold as it was, it was beautiful; pristine, white, and untouched. It was open space as good as it can get. We were the only ones with the intestinal fortitude, to be out there and it was all ours to enjoy. The idea of preserving open space seemed to hit home in an especially inspiring way as we took it all in, a landscape protected by the Conservancy so that it will always stay the way it is, changing only with the seasons and the weather.

It is spring now, and there is much to enjoy in the open spaces. However, the wide-open winter landscape does provide special moments of stark beauty that can't be found in any other season. If you weren't out there this past winter, make it a point to get out there next year and as often as possible between now and then. It's too good to miss.

Planned Giving: Additional Benefits for You and GVC

GVC is proud to have a remarkably loyal and generous group of supporters. These supporters have made possible all of GVC's successes.

GVC has primarily utilized gifts of cash as our main fundraising technique. There are, however, many other ways to support the Conservancy that may also provide the donor with more favorable tax consequences. The following is a short list of additional types of philanthropic support available.

- **Gifts of appreciated securities;** Avoid capital gains taxes by making a gift of appreciated securities to GVC. You benefit by not having to pay the capital gains, while still getting the tax deduction for the value of the gift.
- **Gifts of real estate and property;** GVC can benefit from gifts of tangible goods, not just cash or securities. The donor benefits from a tax deduction for the value of the property while avoiding the capital gains.
- **Life Income Gifts (*charitable gift annuity and charitable remainder trusts*);** A more complicated philanthropic endeavor, a CGA or CRT is a vehicle whereby the donor makes a gift of cash, securities or other assets to GVC. GVC then holds these assets or reinvests them and provides the donor with the income for a set period of time. At the end of the specified time, GVC receives the assets.
- **Bequests;** This is a simple technique whereby the donor directs a gift to GVC in his or her will. This gift is transferred to GVC free of the estate tax.

This is a very brief explanation of some of the other types of philanthropy available. If you or anyone you know is interested in investigating any of these options, please contact the Conservancy at the number listed above, or contact you estate or tax advisor.

N.B. Please note a change in the Conservancy's email:

gvconservancy@frontiernet.net