



September 24, 1999

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THE GENESEE VALLEY CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

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Thanks to all the volunteers

GVC (and especially the staff) would like this opportunity to recognize all the selfless volunteers who donate their time.

For helping clean-up the RR Bed:

Jim Boynton, Jeff Herberger, Chat Robinson, Richard Sisson, Gerald Young, and Waste Management, Inc. for donating a dumpster

For leading the nature walks this summer:

Bob Beason, Jim Kimball, Pat Martin, Steph Spittal,

For helping produce our new folder:

Louise Wadsworth, Photographer, David Royka of Archer Communications for Graphic Design

For Various help:

Andrew Chanler, Oliver Chanler, Celeste Grace, Ellie Houston, Mildred Li, Jesse Llop, Lynne Mazadoorian, Chip & Sharon Presutti, Kathleen Thomas, Sally Wood, Ed Young,

GENESEE VALLEY CONSERVANCY NEWS

Additional Land Acquisition, Increased Staff Time, Interns and Volunteers make GVC a Busy Place

GVC is currently working on five new conservation easements we hope to have completed and recorded by the end of the year. If everything goes as planned, we may have an additional 660 acres of land protected. This increases total land protected by GVC to almost 5,800 acres. A remarkable figure, given the organization did not exist ten years ago, and was run by volunteers for nine of those ten years.

In July, the Board of Directors agreed to hire our staff member on to a full-time position. Eric Grace worked for the Conservancy as a part time staff member from July 1998 to July 1999. After realizing there is more than enough work to keep him occupied full-time, the board unanimously agreed to offer him this option.

"With so much happening in the world of conservation, GVC is busier than ever," said Eric. "We have some really neat projects currently underway, as well as some beautiful properties we expect to preserve with conservation easements."

To help Eric, GVC is increasingly relying on interns and volunteers from SUNY Geneseo (*see related story*). This partnership is proving beneficial to both the college and GVC. In addition, as always, GVC is benefiting from the member/volunteers, without which the organization could not exist.

Also happening at the Conservancy this summer was two nature walks. We would like to take a moment and thank the leaders of each of these trips. The first was an early summer wildflower walk in the Wheeler Gully. Led by expert field botanists Patricia (Pat) Martin and Steph Spittal, members of GVC were guided through the gully and could ask questions of the expert leaders. Said Pat after the tour, "I have never led a group of more interested individuals".

Later in the summer, we were privileged to have Jim Kimball and Bob Beason lead a group of amateur bird watchers. While we may not have seen all the various species of birds in the "Nations Road Birding Area", we did hear the threatened Grasshopper Sparrow.

Our sincere thanks go out to the four volunteers who took time out from their busy schedule to lead the novice naturalists. Also, thanks go out to the landowners of the property we visited.

Keep your eyes open for further notices of upcoming field trips. We hope to have some this fall and winter.

GENESEE VALLEY HUNT RACE MEET SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY OCTOBER 9

GVC Adds New Event to the Day

Just a reminder that the annual Genesee Valley Hunt Cup Race Meet will be held on Saturday, October 9 at Nations Farm, in the heart of the Genesee Valley. The races are a great day of fun for the whole family and this year it is even better!

This year all dogs are welcome to join in the festivities. The Canine Grand Prix (a.k.a. Canine Puissance) has been added to the calendar of events. This event tests your dog's jumping skills! Each dog competes against other dogs in his/her class in a single elimination high jumping contest. There are three divisions: Big dog (20" and up), Medium Mutt (12" to 20") and Petite Pooch (under 12"). Dogs are measured at shoulder height. Two handlers may work with the dog, so bring some treats to tempt your dog over the jump. The entry fee is \$5.00 per dog (plus admission to the races). The top dog in each category receives \$25.00, and the runner-ups will receive non-cash prizes. The Pink Parrot Pet Shop generously sponsors the event. All proceeds benefit the GVC.

As always, this years Race Meet has plenty of activities both on the course and off. When not engrossed in the action packed races there is much more to do for the whole family. You can visit the stick horse races, free pony and hayrides, terrier races and boutique shops; not to mention participating in or watching the new Canine Grand Prix. The Race Meet will consist of 10 races. Again this year the Fleet Private Client Group is sponsoring the \$ 25,000 Fleet Genesee Valley Hunt Cup Race and area Rochester Area Ford Dealers Association will sponsor the \$10,000 Martha S. Wadsworth Memorial Race. Your attendance at the races lets them know you appreciate their continued support.

General admission is only \$7.00 for adults (\$5 for advance purchase of tickets) FREE for kids 12 and under. For reserved parking and other special rates please call the Conservancy office and we will get any pertinent information to you.

Please remember that GVC is a major beneficiary of proceeds from the Race Meet. We appreciate your support at this event and encouraging people you know to attend.

SPRAWL AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

Guest Essayist Oliver Chanler

Sprawl recently made it into the lexicon of popular political buzzwords. Nearly all politicians denounce this terrible blight on our landscape. It is interesting, however, that the word is no longer always preceded by 'urban', or 'suburban'. It's just sprawl, and it's sprawling across the landscape, especially in little towns that are accessible to jobs in the cities. Still, suburban sprawl gets the most attention these days, and we have witnessed lawmakers struggling to get a handle on what to do about it. "Smart growth" appears to be a legislative goal of many politicians, but they have yet to truly define what that means. The New York Senate has called for a commission on land-use planning and economic development that would examine growth and other issues over the next 2½ years. There we have it, a new, long-term study, while new houses go up on the edges of fields and along country roads like mushrooms in the dark.

There are those who might wish that all this could be stopped and then reversed. But that's not in the realm of reality. In the realm of reality is the old ecologist's plea to think globally, act locally. Land-use plans don't have to be difficult. They really are just a way of looking ahead, instead of surrendering to impulse development. Examples of this can be found along former country roads lined with houses on ½ acre lots, each dwelling with a well on one side and a septic system on the other. Such increasingly commonplace scenes are not necessary, or as profitable as they could be. Land-use planning can make a tremendous difference, in esthetics, tax benefits, and even profits.

Such planning is the specialty of conservancies such as ours. The trick seems to be to make people more aware of the existence of conservancies and the services they can provide. The Genesee Valley Conservancy already protects more than 5,000 acres in western New York. Landowners, with the Conservancy's advice, can preserve the natural characteristics of their land, while retaining future equity in the property. The organization does not oppose development. It does not want to prevent individuals from gaining financially from the property

they own. It does, however, provide ideas, plans, and programs for landowners who want to get the best use from their land while at the same time keeping it as unspoiled as possible. We need to spread the word, to make more people aware of what the Conservancy can do

By sending this article to GVC members, one might think we are preaching to the choir. Although there is some truth to this, what we need is some preaching by the choir. The success of GVC depends on expanding its preservation of open space and agricultural land. We need to raise public consciousness about the Conservancy, and word of mouth can be very effective if enough voices speak the good word. So, we hope that members can consider themselves as active by telling others about the Genesee Valley Conservancy and what it can do, and keep us in the spotlight.

GVC THE RECIPIENT OF TWO GRANTS

For the second year, GVC has been the recipient of a \$10,000 grant from the May K. Houck Foundation, given in memory of Grace Moffett Knapp.

This contribution is to our general operating funds and will be put to use furthering property protection. GVC thanks personally Kip Hargrave, the May K. Houck Foundation Trustee responsible for overseeing the generous grant to our organization.

GVC was also the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from the Knox Foundation of Buffalo, New York. This grant is to be used to help the Conservancy adjust to the increased financial burden of a full-time staff member.

This is not the first grant GVC has received from the Knox Foundation. We thank them for their continued support.

GENESEE VALLEY CONSERVANCY INTERNSHIPS BENEFIT SUNY GENESEO STUDENTS AND GVC

Student Intern, Eileen Larney

The department of Geography at SUNY Geneseo has arranged with GVC to allow students with an interest in conservation to intern throughout the school year. Last spring two interns had a very beneficial experience working hands on gaining knowledge of conservation related issues. One of the students used the acquired knowledge to help get into a graduate program in a related field. This fall, GVC has another student intern to assist with up and coming projects. Eileen Larney is an Anthropology major at SUNY Geneseo with an interest in Primatology and Conservation.

Eileen will be assisting GVC as a liaison between the state and other conservation groups in the region. The State Department of Environmental Conservation and GVC will be working cooperatively on a project concerning land acquisition and conservation. Eileen has also been asked to speak at an introductory geography seminar about conservation and GVC in particular to raise awareness of local conservation opportunities.

The Conservancy is extremely excited with the work in store for the fall, which will be a learning experience for us all. We are pleased to have student interns and volunteers help GVC. This is beneficial in that the students are able to gain hands on experience in their fields of interest; as well educate other students about how GVC functions and what conservation is about.

THANK YOU

Thank you to members who have contributed for 1999. We are seeing more enthusiasm from our supporting members, and would like to send a special thanks to our new members, and those who increased their contributions.

As for those members who have yet to renew, it is never too late.....

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