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Eric Grace

**Thanks to all the  
volunteers**

GVC (and especially its staff) would like this opportunity to recognize all the selfless volunteers who donate their time. From moving furniture to stuffing envelopes to scrubbing floors, these volunteers are true yeopersons.

**Mary Lou Boynton  
Andrew Chanler  
John Chanler  
Oliver Chanler  
Ellie Houston  
Felicity Thomas  
Kathleen Thomas  
Sue and Ted Kinsey  
Lynne Mazadoorian  
Marion & Travis  
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Sally Wood  
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February 5, 1999

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# THE GENESEE VALLEY CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 73, Geneseo, NY 14454  
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**GVC the Recipient of Four New Easements in 1998**

By December of 1998, GVC received four new easements, totaling 315 acres. This brings the total acres of land preserved by GVC to over 5,100 acres.

In the town of Geneseo, Joseph and Nancy O'Dea donated an easement on 72 acres of their beautiful Roscommon Farm. Situated on the southeast corner of County Club and Avon-Geneseo Roads, Roscommon Farm was previously used for raising racehorses and is actively farmed. Flowing through the property is a tributary to Jaycox Creek, which meanders its way to the Genesee River. Roscommon Farm borders Sheila and John Chanler's farm, which was preserved in 1995.

Also in Geneseo, the Seven Nations Stakes Corp. placed a conservation easement on 73 acres of the "Triangle Lot". Located at the intersection of Nations and Roots Tavern Rd., it is known for some of the most beautiful Oak trees in the Valley. Currently the Triangle Lot is used as cattle pasture. Birders are especially fond of this parcel, as it is home to many Eastern Bluebirds and various species of Woodpeckers.

In the town of Avon, H. Gates Lloyd donated an easement on a nine-acre farm lot on Papermill Road. Now with a conservation easement, it will never see more than one residence built on it.

In addition, in Avon, Bill and Meg Lloyd placed an easement on 163 acres of their Haverford Farm. Currently the farm is used for crop farming, horse pasture and some is in a federal set-aside program. There are also some forested sections of the property. It borders the GVC owned railroad bed, and two other preserved parcels.

GVC extends a sincere thanks to these landowners for their desire to see the open space resources of the area preserved in perpetuity. Additionally, we thank all our members, for without your financial support, GVC would not be able to fund its preservation programs. Because of you, GVC is one of the fastest growing Land Trusts in NY State.



**GVC Moves its Office**

In the first week of January, the Conservancy moved out of its basement office to # 1 Main Street, Geneseo. Formerly the Wadsworth/Strong Land Office, the building is on the southeast corner of Main and North Streets, across North Street from Saint Mary's Catholic Church.

"It is a beautiful building, with much more space," said Staff member Eric Grace. "We were outgrowing our former location, especially with our two interns slated to start this spring. I also appreciate having windows and natural light."

"It makes sense that the building be used by the Conservancy," said GVC Treasurer Sally Wood. "Previously the Strong family used the building as an office to oversee the operation of their farms. Now GVC uses the office to preserve the open space and natural areas of the region, which includes the preservation of agricultural lands. Alice [Strong] was a loyal supporter of GVC, and I think she would be pleased with the current use."

The telephone and fax numbers remain the same, as well as the GVC mailing address.

Eric Grace encourages GVC members to stop in for a tour of the new office. He is there during usual business hours, although you may want to call ahead. The phone is 243-2190.

**And the Winner is...**

You may have noticed our new GVC Logo. The designer of the logo is **Soren Thomas**.

Thanks to all members who submitted entries. The competition was fierce, and the decision was not an easy one to make. The runner-ups in the competition are **Catherine Romaine Brown** and **Oliver Chanler**.

Not surprisingly, most of the entries used as an oak tree as the centerpiece.

### Conservation: the Big Picture

Although the spread of developments seems to be relentless and inevitable, protection against such development is also spreading at a brisk clip. Since 1988, grass-roots conservation groups have put off-limits to development 4.7 million acres, an area larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island. The national umbrella organization for these groups is the Land Trust Alliance. The non-profit organization's job description is promoting land conservation. In the past decade, the number of groups in the Land Trust Alliance has increased by more than 60 percent, with local groups springing up across the country as fast as new houses in a development. This reflects an important evolution in land conservation in the United States. Since the sixties, the federal government has been withdrawing from land conservation. Today, its land conservation spending is one-sixth of what it was thirty years ago. State and county governments have stepped in as players in the land conservation movement. However, local land trusts now are the ones making important steps in the fight against the spread of development. These conservation groups, more than 1,200 of them, have at least one million dues paying members.

### Conservation: the Little Picture

For the dues paying members of the Genesee Valley Conservancy, there is good news right here. Membership has increased in the past year, now with more than 550 members. As of the beginning of this year, the organization oversees protection of more than 5,100 acres in Livingston, Erie and Ontario counties. In 1998, The Conservancy was the recipient of a generous grant of \$10,000 from the May K. Hauck Foundation.

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**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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## THANK YOU

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### Introduction to Conservation Easements

GVC uses several techniques to preserve open space. By far the most successful of these are conservation easements. Currently, GVC holds conservation easements on 31 properties and title on two. But what exactly is a conservation easement? For those of you who ask this question, please read on.

To understand a conservation easement, it is important to understand the concept of property. Property can be described as a book of matches. Each match represents a right or "interest" that the landowner possesses. For instance, one match represents the right of the owner to live on the property, another match represents the right to sell, another the right to farm, and so on. Contained within this book of matches is the right to develop the property. This includes the right to build a residence, a barn, silo, etc. If the landowner decides to separate the development "match" from the other rights, and donates or sells this right to a qualified conservation organization, it is called granting a conservation easement.

It is important to remember several things about conservation easements:

- ♣ Once the conservation organization possesses the conservation easement, they can not give this right away to any individual or group who would exercise this right.
- ♣ The property owner maintains all remaining rights other than those granted to the conservation organization.
- ♣ The landowner may retain some future development sites on the property, as long as the conservation purpose of the land is not diminished. This is important for landowners that want to sell part of their property.
- ♣ Conservation easements do not limit farming or other agricultural uses.
- ♣ Conservation easements do not grant public access to property; that is still the right of the landowner to decide upon.
- ♣ Conservation easements are perpetual; they "run with the land". Future landowners must abide by the easement granted by the previous owner.

### GVC Recipient of Rural NY Grant

The Conservancy is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a \$5,000 grant from The Rural New York Grant Foundation. The money will be used for updating our existing easement documentation by digitizing the property surveys and photographs, thus allowing GVC to access and easily update changes in property condition. Additionally, the improvements in mapping capabilities will decrease the cost of granting a conservation easement.

The project is funded in part by the Rural NY Grant Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance of NY with the support of the J.M Kaplan Fund, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation, Philip Morris Companies Inc., the Woodstock Foundation, the New York Times Company Foundation and the Northern New York Foundation, Inc.

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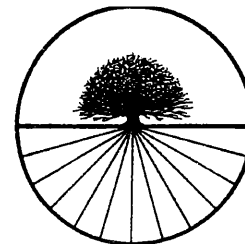
### GVC Brings on two Interns

GVC has brought on two students from SUNY Geneseo to help with some projects for the spring semester.

Erin Belizkjian will be assisting GVC with database building and community outreach. Her primary duty will be increasing the professional community's awareness of GVC's benefits. Some of these groups include attorneys, accountants, the media, realtors and farmers.

Tara Burke will be working on outreach programs to governmental agencies. These include the municipalities and counties in which GVC operates. In addition, Tara will explore conservation opportunities with the federal agencies operating in the Valley.

We are pleased that the Tara and Erin have agreed to help GVC, and know that the experience will be beneficial to the interns and GVC similarly.



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**GENESEO, NY 14454**