

field, forest & fen



Connecting People with the Healthy Lands and Clean Waters that Sustain Us



Welcome to the Family

Repairing the Earth we share

Otsego Land Trust (OLT) welcomes Jonathan Press as our new Community Engagement Coordinator. Jonathan's duties include managing OLT's communications, rallying volunteers, hosting free nature education programs and running events.

After growing up in Brooklyn, New York Jonathan's family relocated to Cherry Valley, for the change in lifestyle. With a Clark Foundation scholarship, Jonathan graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree cum laude from Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications.

Jonathan then moved to Kibbutz Dan in Northern Israel, where he met his wife Lian, and volunteered for the Israel Defense Forces' famous Paratroopers Brigade. After serving in the IDF, Jonathan participated in the Green Apprenticeship at Kibbutz Lotan in Israel's arid southern desert, where he learned about sustainable agriculture, natural building, renewable energy, water management, and ecology. Jonathan

followed the apprenticeship by completing the Global Green MBA, at University of Haifa.

Jonathan and his wife Lian love hiking with their dog Kongo, planting trees, and growing their homestead's roots here in this beautiful part of the world.

"Earth Repair is my commitment, and purpose in life. Decisions we make in our daily lives, impact future generations, as well as the species that share the Earth with us. By changing our perspectives, experiencing new things, and

learning more about the natural systems that provide us fresh water, clean air, and healthy food, we can strengthen the future's ability to share the potential bounty."

John Winter, OLT's Executive Director, said "Jonathan is a great addition to our staff. His experience and enthusiasm for land protection run deep and we look forward to him leading our events and communications as we expand our presence in Otsego County and beyond."

Jonathan works at OLT's offices at 101 Main Street in Cooperstown. We invite you to come in and meet him. ■

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Jonathan and Kongo at Acadia National Park.

Protecting her land, forever—the way she envisioned it

“I first read about Otsego Land Trust and conservation easements in the Franklin Register paper. I thought it was a forward looking and intelligent idea, an invaluable way to help keep my special piece of land safe from development and a haven for our local wildlife,” recounted long time Morris resident Pam Lloyd.

Pam has lived on her land along the upper reaches of Cahoon Creek in the Butternut Valley since the early 1960s. She’s an avid observer of the local wildlife that she shares her land with, even offering some of them refuge in her basement through the aptly labeled, “Opossum Door.”

She also shares her property with her beloved mule and horse, Bunny and Sweetie Pie.

Pam moved to the area after a childhood spent in Wales, where she laments the fact that she witnessed the development and subdivision of her family’s historical homestead. “I am extremely happy to be able to partner with Otsego Land Trust to keep my small slice of our unique region out of unplanned development and friendly for wildlife for generations to come.”

Pam’s property plays an important role for our local waters. On the serenely beautiful 25 acres, one finds many wetlands, seeps and springs which form the headwaters of Cahoon Creek. This creek is a

vital tributary to the Butternut Creek, with which it converges in the Village of Gilbertsville.

Pam completed her conservation easement with Otsego Land Trust this summer, along with conservation easement landowner veterans, Matt and Sara Albright. This was the Albright’s 3rd conservation easement to Otsego Land Trust, bringing their total conserved lands to over 200 acres. Their property contains over 2 miles of frontage along an important tributary to the West Branch of the Otego Creek, a DEC classified trout spawning stream, in New Lisbon.

“It was a pleasure partnering with the Albright family again and with the newest member of our conservation family, Pam, this summer,” said Project Manager Ethan Rubenstein. “Our partner landowners help conserve local lands and waters on which we all rely, as well as the millions of people downstream along the Susquehanna River to the Chesapeake Bay who are affected by the decisions we make here on a daily basis.” ■

If you are interested in protecting your land forever, talk with Ethan at 607-547-2366, or send an email to ethan@otsegoLandTrust.org





Discovering the natural world,

There's something so magical about a stream meandering along its course and something so joyous about the sound of bubbling giggles as kids splash and play in that stream. Thanks to a brand new and exciting partnership, the 2016 Environmental Study Team (EST) students from two local schools got the opportunity to hone valuable skills from their science classrooms that they then implemented in the great outdoors. All while enjoying streams and nature this summer.





Students doing hands-on science (above).
Viewing aquatic insects under microscopes (left).
Testing the water chemistry (middle).

knee deep in a creek

This collaborative venture combined staff from OLT, staff from the Schoharie River Center, students and faculty from Worcester and Schenevus Central Schools, and conservation easement land owners Gail Sondergaard and Larry DeLong. The 2016 EST was a free educational program made possible by funding from the Royal Bank of Canada's Blue Water Project.

From classrooms...into the wild

Twenty junior and senior high school students met three times this summer to conduct water chemistry sampling and aquatic macro invertebrate surveying taught by Schoharie River Center. In June, the group visited our Blueway Trail, first exploring all the wonders of Brookwood Point, its creek and the waters of Otsego Lake's shore. In July, the students traipsed and tromped around Parslow Road Conservation Area where they got waist deep in Oaks Creek and studied the diverse ecosystems there.

For the grand finale in August, students brought what they learned on the Blueway, to their own hometown. Through the dedicated involvement and generosity of Worcester residents and OLT conservation easement land owners Gail Sondergaard and Larry DeLong, the group was able to access Decatur Creek, the main waterway in their community.

After greeting the students enthusiastically, Gail led them on a challenging hike to the upstream creek bank on her property, where even she hopped in



the water for the aquatic surveying. The group then headed downstream, taking note of the structures, residences and land uses they passed for water quality analysis.

After two dairy farms, 30+ residences or structures, and some very steep forested stream banks, the students found themselves back in Decatur Creek, this time alongside Larry DeLong's land. As the surveying wrapped up for the day and the program concluded for the year, several students were overheard saying how neat it was to learn something in school, apply it to real practices in the field and then bring that knowledge to their own community.

Community Conservation

The students weren't the only ones excited about the experience. As Gail watched young faces light up as they got their feet wet turning over stones searching for water bugs, she declared, "Programs like this for our children is exactly why I protected my property with Otsego Land Trust."

OLT and the Schoharie River Center are looking forward to continuing this opportunity for our region's youth in 2017. ■

Parslow Road Blueway Public Access Site

Summer Bird Watching Survey



We recently had a baseline bird survey conducted at Parslow Road, our beautiful—and work in progress—public access site along Oaks Creek. This 86 acre site has diverse habitats consisting of wetlands, riparian zones, grasslands, shrublands, conifer stands, and deciduous forests.

Ecological communities like the balsam firs, the cedar swamps (a northern, Adirondack microclimate), as well as riparian, and succession habitats, attract a wide array of birds—making Parslow Road a great launch pad for birders and nature goers of all ages (don't forget your binoculars!).

We learned some new and exciting things about the birds that call Oaks Creek, and our Blueway public access site, home. In addition to the 66 species of birds at Parslow Road, this baseline

bird survey can help us better understand how future improvements to the site, including removal of invasive species, plantings of native species, and improvements to wildlife habitats (ponds, and graded riparian buffers), will reflect on future bird surveys.

Once we have a better understanding of the types of ecological communities the wildlife prefer, we can better steward, and foster them.

Some highlights from the survey included the sightings of many watch-listed birds including: Chestnut-sided Warblers, Veeries, Blue-winged Warblers, Canada Warblers, Prairie Warblers, and Black-billed Cuckoos. These increasingly endangered birds are finding safe haven at Parslow Road, indicating the importance of the site, as well as the potential for improving it for birds and wildlife moving forward. ■

Joe Yourno: Dedicated Steward, and member of our conservation family

Sometimes there's a certain person that makes you smile, a person who makes you feel warm and fuzzy inside. You're always excited to receive a phone call or a visit from this person. And you are always able to find time for them, because they always make time for you.

At OLT, we are so lucky to know many people like this, but we wanted to point out one in particular, one who has made us smile all year long... Mr. Joe Yourno.

Joe came to us for the first time at the Parslow Road grand opening in May of 2015, and thankfully he hasn't left our side since. He attended 5 of our events that year, more than any other individual, trekking all the way from his home in Middleburgh to participate and always showing up with a huge grin and a "Hey! How ya doing?."

This year his presence was felt in a different way. If you have visited one of our Blueway sites, then you have probably noticed the snazzy new registration boxes on the kiosks. You may also have

noticed that Joe's name is all over the sign in sheets.

Joe frequented Fetterley Forest and Parslow Road this summer, over 10 times. Now Joe didn't tell us this, the sign in sheets did. He was there hiking the trails, picking up trash, maintaining the area around the kiosk with his own tools and stewarding the properties with love and care as if it were his own.

So thank you, Joe. Here's to you and your dedicated and humble ways. You are our 2016 Volunteer of the Year! ■





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Our next generation of conservationists

OLT was lucky to have two bright, energetic, conservation minded stewardship interns this summer. David Jaeger, Jr. and Grace Knott were valuable members of our team.

With their help, over 10,000 acres of conservation easement lands were monitored! They also helped keep the Blueway public access sites of Fetterley Forest, Parslow Road Conservation Area, Deowongo Island, Brookwood Point, and Compton Bridge well maintained so that hundreds of local community members could enjoy them all season long. David and Grace helped coordinate volunteers, lead outdoor programs for kids, and conducted research with SUNY Oneonta's Biological Field Station.

David graduated this year from Clemson University with a degree in Agricultural Mechanization and Business. "Personally, I have always wanted to help protect the natural world around me. I say this because I know it is worth protecting for not only my generation but for the countless ones to come and we deserve a beautiful and green world to thrive in and enjoy."

Grace is a 2016 graduate from SUNY Cobleskill with a degree in Plant Sciences and Environmental

David, Grace and Marcie (snapping the camera) on Oaks Creek doing a monitoring visit.

Studies. "Through this internship I had so many opportunities to make connections in the local community, build my resume, and participate in many aspects of land trust work. It's been a great summer!"

We thank David and Grace for their hard work and dedication. We wish them the best of luck with their future careers in conservation and beyond. ■



In memorial and in recognition of the lifetime achievement of Judy Wertenbaker

Judy Wertenbaker was a founding board member of Otsego Land Trust. She was a staunch supporter, and a nurturing spirit for the organization. Her quiet ways were always positive even when she disagreed with one approach or another. For her it was always the big picture of land conservation that was important. She never lost sight of that vision. As a landowner who walked lightly on the land, using but never abusing it, she set an example for us all. We will miss her positive spirit. ■



Post Office Box 173
Cooperstown, New York 13326

Otsego Land Trust conserves our natural heritage of woodlands, farmlands, and waters that sustain rural communities, promote public health, support wildlife diversity and inspire the human spirit.

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Otsego Land Trust is partially funded by the New York Conservation Partnership Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program with support from the State of New York. A copy of Otsego Land Trust's annual financial report may be obtained upon request from our office or from the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau. ATTN: FOIL Officer, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

join us...

SUN., NOVEMBER 13

**'All the Time in the World' Screening
for Glimmerglass Film Days**

Fenimore Art Museum • 3-5pm

MON., NOVEMBER 14

Archaeology Hike

Thurston Hill Road/Vibbard Road, Richfield Springs
10am-12pm

WED., FEBRUARY 1

2017 Photo Contest Announcement

Have an idea for an event?

Share your suggestions with Jon by phone at 607-547-2366 or by email to jon@otsegoLandtrust.com

You can receive news and event updates directly to your email by signing up on our website.



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