



From Railroads to Retirement

1,500 acres conserved in the Hoosic River Valley!

The Philpott farm is located smack across the road from where the Rutland railroad line crosses the Boston and Maine (B&M) in the Hoosic River Valley. That was a big advantage at the turn of the century when fluid milk was shipped by train.

Earl and Etta Philpott bought the farm, including the 1740 Bratt Mansion, in 1936. The Philpotts started out raising dairy cows and hens on their 155 acres. Their son Carleton began working full-time on the family farm in 1951. Not long afterward, he married Corinne and decided to start a family. To bring in extra income, Carleton drove a daily truck route, collecting milk from other farmers. He delivered the milk to the United Dairy System creamery at the Hoosick train station. Milk cans were loaded onto the

refrigerated train cars every day at 9 a.m. The creamery is still there today, just behind Curtis Lumber.

By the 1960s, milk was mostly moved in long-haul refrigerated trucks on highways. The B&M made the last delivery of bulk milk from Eagle Bridge to Boston in 1972. Farmers, including Carleton, had to invest in bulk holding tanks and increase their herd size to survive. Tanker trucks began coming to the farm every other day to pick up milk and ship it to Springfield, MA for pasteurization. There, the milk was separated and bottled or made into cheese. *continued on page 5*



“Preserving the agricultural heritage of our community and keeping this land available for farming in the future has always been our goal.”

- Carleton Philpott



Ensuring a Future for Farming and Forestry in our Community

The Agricultural Stewardship Association (ASA) protects our community's working landscape of farms and forests, connects people to the land, and promotes a vibrant future for agriculture in the region. To date, we have assisted landowners with the conservation of 16,917 acres of productive farm and forest land in Washington and Rensselaer counties.

ASA receives funding from its members and supporters, including the Castanea Foundation, and the New York Conservation Partnership Program (funded by New York's Environmental Protection Fund and administered by the Land Trust Alliance, in coordination with the state Department of Environmental Conservation).

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Agricultural Stewardship Association

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Spring Brings New Optimism

We at ASA feel very fortunate to have so many young supporters and friends on our Board, among our staff, and also in the greater community. An appreciation for protecting our working lands cuts across a lot of divides, including those of age.

You may have noticed how often the stories we tell about conserving agricultural land are stories about multiple generations. They are stories about farm families conserving their land so that they can pass it down to their children. They are stories about people who have bought a 200 year old farm, but can't tolerate the thought of productive soils succumbing to rural sprawl or being paved over with housing developments after they're gone. Or the story in this issue about Lynn Caponera conserving Scotch Hill Farm in honor of Maurice Sendak, the famous children's book author, artist and previous owner. Maurice was inspired by Beatrix Potter, who in addition to being a famous children's book author, was also a world-class 19th Century conservationist.

"There's plenty for my generation to worry about: job security, climate change, war and divisive politics. Even with all of this negative stuff going on, ASA's work gives me cause for optimism. ASA is conserving local farms. That means there will be local food for us and for future generations. ASA's work gives me hope for the future."

— Ian Kelly, age 22



There's also something about our local working landscapes and numerous Greek Revival houses that is quintessentially American. These farms are the product of hundreds of years of hard work, optimism and stewardship as reflected in the story about Carleton and Corrine Philpott.

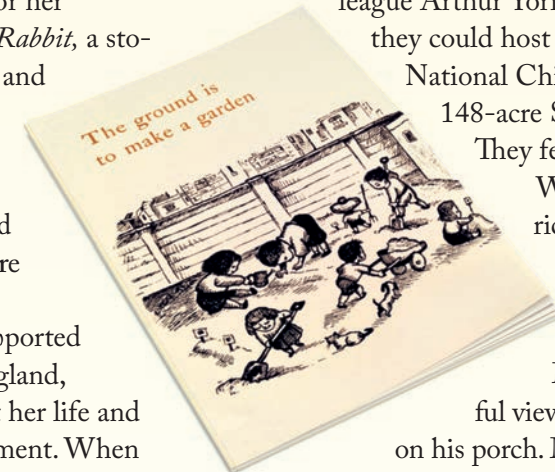
As Spring comes to Washington and Rensselaer counties, we know that even with so much in the news that is cause for pessimism, you will feel a sense of hope as the hills around us turn green and begin to produce food. We know you feel that way because you continue to support our work, year in and year out. We are especially grateful to you as Spring returns to our working lands.

With all our thanks. —Teri Ptacek & Katherine Roome

Eat it up. He'd love it so!

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the name Maurice Sendak? For most people, it's the book *Where the Wild Things Are*. Originally published in 1963, this award-winning book has sold tens of millions of copies and is as popular today as it was more than 50 years ago. In fact, President Obama and the First Lady read it aloud at this year's Easter Egg Roll. But what many don't know is that Maurice drew inspiration from author and illustrator Beatrix Potter—but not only for her story telling ability. He also deeply admired her farmland conservation work in Northern England and wanted to emulate it.

Like Maurice, Beatrix is well known for her writing and illustrations, including *Peter Rabbit*, a story about a mischievous bunny who steals and eats veggies from neighboring farmer Mr. McGregor. What is less universally known is that during her lifetime Beatrix purchased and cared for 15 farms, bred sheep and grew hay. Those landscapes were inspiration for many of her stories and illustrations in the early 1900s. Potter supported the National Trust (the land trust for England, Wales and Northern Ireland) throughout her life and followed their principles in land management. When Beatrix passed away in 1943, she left the 15 farms, including over 4,000 acres of land, to the National Trust. That is the legacy Maurice admired and hoped to follow.



For most of his life, Maurice lived in Ridgefield, Connecticut where he conserved over 100 acres of forested land surrounding his home. He was drawn to Washington County in part because of his friendship with the Monks of New Skete from whom he purchased a dog. He also enjoyed several retreats at New Skete. When Maurice and his colleague Arthur Yorinks set out to find a property where they could host workshops for their Night Kitchen National Children's Theatre, they came across the 148-acre Scotch Hill Farm property in Jackson. They fell in love with it.

When the children's theatre ended, Maurice used the farm as a retreat. It was (and still is) used by the Sendak Fellowship, an artist in residency program, throughout the summer. Above all, Maurice enjoyed the peace and beautiful views of the Green Mountains from a chair on his porch. Many of the artists that come to use the space will tell you that the farm has the most beautiful light. A few compare it to the light found in Tuscany, Italy. The view of the night sky from the farm is *continued on page 4*





infinite, filled with billions of flickering stars. The luminescent night sky conjures up the poetic language of Maurice's book, *In the Night Kitchen*: "He grabbed

the cup as he flew up and over the top of the Milky Way in the night kitchen."

Now owned by Lynn Caponera, the executrix of his estate and president of his foundation, Scotch Hill Farm is home to the In The Night Kitchen Farm, a non-profit that grows and distributes fresh produce to those in need. In the past seven years, they have donated over 7,500 pounds of fresh vegetables to the Regional Food Bank and more recently to local food pantries in Salem and Cambridge. The demand on local food pantries has doubled in our community as 1 in 5 children struggle with hunger. This year, Greenwich's Comfort Food Community will also be a beneficiary of the farm's bounty.

Lynn donated an easement on the farm in December 2015. She said, "It is really important to me that the farm remain how Maurice and Arthur wanted. Maurice believed that nurturing and food go hand in hand. Many of his books have an element of food in them." Lynn has many fond memories of gardening with Maurice and is dedicated to keeping the farm as a creative space for people to enjoy the open and beautiful views, but most important, as a source of fresh, healthy food for the community. Lynn also leases several of the fields to a neighboring dairy operation as support land.

With seventeen 10' x 10' plots sponsored by supporters of the *In The Night Kitchen* organization and two acres of row crops, In The Night Kitchen Farm is growing enough food not only to feed the local bunnies who steal veggies; they are also ensuring that fewer people in our community go to bed without supper.

The Glean Team Wants You!

Fresh food at the local food pantry is good for those in need and local farmers

In collaboration with Comfort Food Community in Greenwich and the Squash Hunger program at Capital Roots in Troy, ASA has introduced a gleaning initiative. Gleaning is harvesting produce in fields and gardens after the main harvest is over. Often, farmers have difficulty finding secondary markets for those "leftover" crops. Gleaning allows willing farmers to direct this fresh surplus produce to community organizations that redistribute it to people who need it most. The crops gleaned by the Glean Team are made available to Comfort Food Community and Capital Roots. The key to making this all work is volunteer labor!

Thus far, the Glean Team has harvested more than 2,300 pounds of produce from the conserved Alleged Farm and many pounds of potatoes and apples from Jen Ward's Our Farm and Nate Darrow's Saratoga Apple. We would like to thank all the farmers who have welcomed the Glean Team into their fields. Help us make a difference—join our team!



"Gleaning increases the amount of fresh food we have to offer in our emergency food pantry. We can't thank those participating farmers enough for their involvement in the program and the impact it has made locally."

— Devin Bulger,
Comfort Food Community



Welcome to the Board!

We are thrilled to welcome Diane Kennedy to the Board. Diane manages a not-for-profit trade association, The New York News Publishers Association, where she is responsible for government relations, budgeting, compliance and human resources management. She also



owns a small farm in Buskirk where she raises chickens for meat and eggs, dairy goats and fine wool sheep.

We're also delighted to welcome Robert Southerland. Now retired, Rob worked as an architect and is co-owner of the Gardenworks Farm in Salem. His understanding of local land use pressures as well as the local agricultural infrastructure makes Rob a great addition to the team. The fact that he's a great cook and cheese aficionado adds to his resume.

"I firmly believe that conserving prime agricultural land for future generations is of utmost importance to producing food and providing opportunities for farmers. I am honored to serve on ASA's board and dedicate the time needed to help the organization achieve future goals." — Rob Southerland



continued from page 1

A commitment to agriculture and a rural way of life

"We had several opportunities to sell because of the railroad," said Carleton. "But you get up in the back and you're looking at some of the finest farmland in the Hoosick Valley. It's important to us and the Hoosick community that future generations are able to farm this land," he said. The farm's dead level fields are sandwiched between the B&M Railroad line and the Hoosick River. "There isn't a stone in them," he says. There have been many people who wanted to build on those flat, fertile fields. But he and Corrine never considered selling.

In what Carleton and Corrine jokingly refer to as a "semi-retirement plan," Carleton transitioned the business from dairy to hay and corn production in 1998. Thanks to the farm's proximity to neighboring farms and his reasonable prices, Carleton built a niche market in the area. When he was finally ready for "real" retirement 14 years later, he leased the fields to a neighboring dairy operation for support land. He also created a trust so son Christopher will inherit the farm.

With the protection of the Philpott Farm, there will now be a block of nearly 1,500 agricultural acres conserved along the Hoosick River in New York and Vermont. Contiguous blocks of farmland strengthen the long-term agricultural viability of the area as well as the individual farms. Farmers have the security of knowing that there will be land available for farming, while large blocks of farmland minimize potential conflicts with non-farming neighbors. Additionally, these large blocks enable neighboring farms to work collaboratively and exchange resources.

*Funded by the Environmental Protection Fund in coordination with the Land Trust Alliance and the Department of Environmental Conservation.

Join us for some fun on the farm!

Make a Connection to Our Working Landscapes

ASA offers a variety of programs and events to give you and your family an opportunity to visit local farms and learn more about our rich agricultural heritage. We organize farm tours, bike rides, nature walks and educational workshops throughout the year. Be sure to sign up for our e-news at www.agstewardship.org and “like” us on Facebook to get all the latest details.

May through August

Farm Photography for Kids

- April 23:** Sheep at Ensign Brook Farm
- May 7:** Beef Cows at Stone Meadow Farm
- June 18:** Goats at Northern Spy Farm
- June 25:** Goats, chickens, pigs, rabbits, lambs, poultry at R'Eisen Shine Farm
- August 25:** A bit of everything at the Washington County Fair

\$10/per child, per session
Register at agstewardship.org



Learn how to take great photos of your favorite farm animals and landscapes. Farm Photography for Kids gives kids (ages 8 and up) a unique opportunity to visit some of our region's most interesting farms, explore what goes on and learn how to take great photos. Professional photographers Dona Ann McAdams and Cliff Oliver will teach the fundamentals of photographic composition and lighting and share their insights and techniques for getting that perfect shot.

Over the course of the late spring and summer, we'll visit diverse farms to find out what makes them so special and worth protecting. After the trips are completed, we will choose one photo from each student photographer to be matted, framed and hung as a special exhibition in ASA's

booth at the Washington County Fair, Schaghticoke Fair and other venues.

Sign up for one or as many trips as you like. Space is limited, please register early. Don't miss this great opportunity to document for yourself the beauty and diversity of our community's working farms.

This project is made possible with funds from the Decentralized Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and administered by the Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council.

May 25th

Sunrise Birding Walk

6am, White Oak Farm, Buskirk

Free to the public
Register at agstewardship.org

For the early birds (pun intended)! Join us for a walk on the conserved White Oak Farm in Buskirk with retired wildlife ecologist, Steve Sanford. The walk will be of interest to beginners and experts alike and will include farm fields, forest and a large beaver pond. Participants should bring binoculars and wear appropriate footwear. You may also want to bring insect spray for tick protection.

June 16th

ASA Movie Screening

7pm, The Arts Center of the Capital Region, Troy

Join us for an evening screening of the short film: Local Food. For Good. Forever by award winning documentary filmmaker, David deVries. David and videographer John Oakley spent a year filming local farms and interviewing local farmers, conservationists and local landowners to bring the story of the Agricultural Stewardship Association to life. The evening will include refreshments and a discussion about the importance of conserving local working landscapes.

June 27th through July 1st



Farms, Food and Photography Camp

9am to 4pm, daily
The Arts Center of the Capital Region, Troy

Non-Member Fee: \$265
Campships available
Register at artscenteronline.org

ASA is teaming up again with The Arts Center of the Capital Region in Troy to offer this unique camp (for middle school students) focusing on farming, food and photography. Students will visit local vegetable and dairy farms to learn about farming operations and to harvest food with their own hands. Back at The Arts Center, students will learn basic cooking skills and discuss the concept of “farm-to-table.” The students will prepare a meal with the food they've harvested. Students will also document their time on the farm and in the kitchen through photography and will use the state-of-the-art Digital Art Studio to create a series of photographs, recipes, blog posts, and other media to relate their experiences. The students' work will be displayed at ASA's booth at the Washington County and Schaghticoke fairs.

August 4th

Forever Farmland Supper

6 to 9pm
Hand Melon Farm, Greenwich

Tickets on sale in July



Join us while we honor those families who have made a gift to our community by conserving their land at this unique harvest dinner on the farm. Featuring foods sourced from local farms at the height of the growing season, this dinner promises to be a sumptuous celebration of the bounty our farmers provide. The event will be catered by Chef's Consortium, a group of dynamic chefs dedicated to sharing the joys of local foods. This year we will also have special guests, the Fabulous Beekman Boys, winners of 2012's Amazing Race, creators of the lifestyle brand Beekman 1802, bestselling authors and farmers from Sharon Springs, NY on hand to help with our celebration.

October 8th through 10th

15th Annual Landscapes for Landsake Art Sale & Exhibition

Opening reception: 10/8 noon to 5pm
Gallery hours: 10/9 & 10/10, noon to 4pm



Our premier event of the season and biggest fundraiser of the year features artwork from more than 40 local artists inspired by the beauty of our region's working landscapes. Fifty percent of the proceeds benefit ASA's farmland conservation program. Don't miss the 15th anniversary of this landmark art event!



October 22nd & 23rd 29th & 30th

Game of Logging

Levels 1 & 2: 10/22 & 23, 8am to 4pm
Tiashoke Farm, Easton

Levels 3 & 4: 10/29 & 30, 8am to 4pm
St. Croix Farm, Schaghticoke

The four levels must be completed in sequence. \$150 per session.
Register at agstewardship.org

For several years ASA has partnered with the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District to offer the Game of Logging Chain Saw Safety Training courses through Northeast Woodland Training, Inc. These courses in safety, productivity, conservation and cutting techniques have been very popular with both professional loggers and weekend warriors. We hear enthusiastic reviews from every class as the Game of Logging is widely regarded as the premier timber harvest training in the country.

This valuable training from top trainers will teach newer and safer aspects of felling, chainsaw reactive forces, bore cutting and pre-planning the fell. Instructors will cover safety features of chainsaws and personal protective equipment. Class size is limited to 10 participants per level. Participants are encouraged to bring their own chainsaws and safety equipment. Equipment will be provided for those who need it.

New! Game of Logging Scholarships

An enthusiastic participant of the 2015 Game of Logging trainings has offered a scholarship with the purpose of establishing a legacy of safety to be passed on to generations of colleagues, friends and family. Our anonymous donor will fully fund 4 scholarships covering up to four levels of training for the 2016 training sessions. (To be eligible, participants must not be professionally employed in the use of chain saws.) In addition, any scholarship participants successfully completing all four sessions may receive reimbursement for the cost of new safety equipment to include helmet, chaps/safety pants, safety gloves, first aid pouch and utility belt. Specific types of safety equipment and dollar limitations apply.

To apply, contact Janet Britt at ASA:
janet@agstewardship.org



Sponsorship Opportunities for Your Business

Business sponsorships and grants make these programs possible. For more information about sponsorships and upcoming programs, visit our website, or call Katie Jilek, at 692-7285.



Conserved Property for Sale

Seeking a tranquil place to start a small farm, build a home or just escape the hustle and bustle? We are pleased to offer a 24.45-acre property in the Town of Wright, Schoharie County, NY that offers many options to prospective buyers, all within a short drive of Interstate 88 and the Village of Schoharie and within 25 miles of Albany/Colonie/Schenectady.

This vacant property features four fields, which are currently used by a local farmer for hay, in addition to a small patch of woods. It offers beautiful views of Rundycup Mountain and the hills to the west. The property is located

off Dugan Hill Road, just north of State Highway 443.

This property was given to ASA by a generous donor as part of ASA's Gifts of Real Estate Program. As a condition of the sale, a conservation easement, held by a local land trust, will run with the land restricting use to agricultural and forestry uses as well as a single-family residence. As a bonus, keeping the fields in agricultural assessment and applying for the NYS Conservation Easement Tax Credit will keep the property affordable.

The asking price is \$42,900. For more information, contact ASA at 692-7285.

Do You Have Agricultural Land for Sale or Lease?

ASA's mission isn't just about conserving farmland. It's also about keeping our agricultural community viable for the future. Our partnership in the Hudson Valley Farmlink Network allows us to connect farmers and landowners with resources and each other.

Who: HVFN is a partnership of 15 organizations, coordinated by the American Farmland Trust, committed to connecting farmers to farms throughout the Hudson Valley.

What: Look for updates on workshops and networking events for farmers and landowners and find resources including sample leases, financing, tax insurance information, and more.

Where: Learn about events and resources at hudsonvalleyfarmlandfinder.org. Search listings of farmers and farm properties or contact ASA to list a property.



Save Farmland... *and* Save Money!

Federal Income Tax Deduction

In December, land conservation received strong bipartisan support from Congress when they made the Enhanced Conservation Tax Incentive permanent. The Incentive significantly increases the federal tax deduction that can be taken by a landowner who donates a qualified conservation easement or does a "bargain sale." A bargain sale simply means an easement that is purchased at less than its full appraised value. The donated value of the easement, as determined by an appraisal, is a charitable contribution and, as such, is the basis for the federal income tax deduction. In the past, a

donor could deduct 30% of his or her adjusted gross income against the easement value in the year of the easement donation and for up to five subsequent years. The newly permanent Incentive increases the level of income tax deduction to 50% of a donor's income and extends the carry-forward period from 5 to 15 years. If a donor is a "qualifying farmer" as defined by the IRS (essentially, a landowner who derives 50% or more of his or her income from farming) then the landowner can deduct 100% of his or her income. Conservation easements may also help with estate taxes and planning and can be donated during one's lifetime or post-mortem by executors of the estate.

New York State Conservation Easement Tax Credit

New York State offers landowners of donated or bargain sale conservation easements a property tax credit of 25% of town, county and school taxes that are paid on the protected soils. The landowner pays the full amount of the taxes locally but then is entitled to a refundable tax credit from the state of up to \$5,000 a year per taxpayer. The tax credit can be claimed annually and runs with the land, thus allowing subsequent landowners to also claim the property tax credit.

For more information, contact ASA, or a tax professional. The information in this article does not constitute legal or tax advice.

You are a Part of History!

Your Support Makes Farmland Protection Possible.

ASA would like to express heartfelt gratitude to our wonderful community of supporters.

The following contributions were made between November 1, 2015 and April 1, 2016. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information. Please contact us to note any changes that should be made for the next issue of our newsletter.

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Government

New York State Council on the Arts*
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Ellen K Viereck
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Rae and David Whitehead
Wilson Homestead Old Books, Sally and Joe Brillon
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Elana Yerushalmi Kamenir and Steven Kamenir
Brian Zweig

Friends

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Battenkill Books
Ronnie Benware
Kathy and John Braico
Jennifer and David Braucher
Matilda Brett
Al and Nancy Budde
Janice M. Cipperly
Linda Coollick
Patricia B. Coon
Marjorie and Peter Geiger
Selma and Leon Gortler
Diane Guendel
Dale Hall and Mary Laedlein
Jennifer Hamilton
Jan Haney and Jeremy Peters
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Harvest Basket Herbs, Andrea Grom
David Higby and Nancy Hand Higby
Marcia Hopple
Joint Venture Farm, Maryann and Gary Brownell
Susan Kenyon
J Kinsley
Susan Las
Joan K. Lowe, E.A.
Baraba and David Mallek
Richard Mazzaferro
Suanne and Todd McLenithan
Theresa and James Migii
Sarah Miller and Nathaniel Corwin
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Lisa Towne
Cynthia and Kent Wian
Marilyn Zaborek
Cynthia Zielaskowski
Barbara Zimmer

Monthly Giving

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Dorothy Halligan
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Diane Kennedy
Long Days Farm, Deborah Jaffe and Edwin Schiele
Ronald McLean

Tara Nolan
Jack and Cindy Parillo
Anne Savage and Michael Myers
Edith Schiele
Louise and J.B. Sobing
Erin Tobin and Roger Bearden

In Honor Of

Ashley Bridge, Luke and Iver Goldreyer
Caroline Serotta
The Bunnell Family
Tena Bunnell
Brian and Justine Denison
Barbara Coughlin and John Fallon
Constance Kheel
Anonymous
Sarah Kingsbury
Sandra Kingsbury
Horace and Grace Klein
Alice Mairs
Sandy Lamb
Bonnie Lamb
Lee Ligon & Len Barot
Jennifer Harmon
Joe Robertson
Marjorie Robertson
Katherine Roome
Elliott Rebhun and Brad Voigt
Joan, Erich and Paul Ruger
Cynthia Zielaskowski
Maddilyn Ryan
Aunt Theresa & Uncle Jim
Gretchen Sibley
Jane and Kenneth Robbins
John and Joann Tarbox
Charles E Hauck

In Memory Of

Ron & Leslie Bouplon
Renee Bouplon and Todd Rollend
Alexandra Stevens
Richard and Richard Allan Duvall
Wendy Duvall
Elektra
David Ebershoff
Jon Giles
Kerry Giles
Jene Highstein
Katharine Highstein
Ruth Hill
Ann Frisino
Jack and Pat Lamb
Pat and Jack Isgro
Robert Lohnes
Carol and Joe MacDonald
John Edward Niles
Sophia Healy
John Stark
Janet Stark
Dave Suttle
Kathleen and Joel Batha
Cathy Firman
Evelyn Tarricone
Ronnie Benware
Walter & Eleanor Taylor
Robert Taylor

In Kind Goods & Services

Betterbee
Jeffrey Bowers
Brunswick Community Center
Chick and Hen Baking Company
T.W. Collins Photography
Crandall's Corner Farm, Stephen Holbrook and Julie Callahan
Rodney Dow
Good Fence Farm, Katie DeGroot
Town of Hartford
Harvest Basket Herbs, Andrea Grom
Hoosick Grange
Joint Venture Farm, Maryann and Gary Brownell
Lawrence White Photography
The Maple News
Doug Moore
The Old Station Inn
Sweet Beet Bistro

Volunteers

David Armbruster
John and Gigi Begin
Leslie Bender
Matt Cannon
Todd Collins & Bill Thomas
Mary Dee and Clem Crowe
Elizabeth Ellard
Betsy Foote
Dave Green
Kamber Jilek
Donna Marns
Alyssa McClenning
Lisa Randles
Jack Rath
Bella Rollend
Todd Rollend
Zach Rollend
Joanne Tilley
John and Peg Underwood
Lawrence White
Frank and Terry Ziehm

Thank You for Your Service!

After serving for six years, this spring marks the departure of Board member Art Brod. As a land-use planner, Art has been a thoughtful and knowledgeable resource on planning issues in the Hudson Valley. Art also assisted with ASA's new Farmland Conservation Plan. He served on both the Land Project and Stewardship & Governance and Board Development committees.

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*This project is made possible with funds from the Decentralized Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and administered by Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council

** Funding provided by New York's Environmental Protection Fund and administered by the Land Trust Alliance, in coordination with the state Department of Environmental Conservation



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