### Crossing the Line to 15,000 Conserved Acres

A Revolutionary War Era Farm on the Hudson River is Conserved Forever

Sitting in a rocking chair on the porch of the Collins' farmhouse in the spring, the smell of free-sia, lilacs and roses is intoxicating and the view of the Hudson River is striking. The Saratoga National Battlefield is visible from several vantage points around the farm. These 198 acres have been in farm production since 1739, forty years before Benedict Arnold betrayed the colonists just down the river at West Point. Over time, the farm became a working dairy that remained in operation until the 1960's. Five generations of Jill Collins' ancestors have worked these highly productive flat crop fields and pasturelands for over 100 years.

#### The Farm is the Perfect Place to Raise Kids

love the outdoors and everything that

living here brings to our family".

Eight years ago, when Jill and her husband Kevin Collins moved from their suburban home in Saratoga Springs to the family farm, they had two goals. The first was to raise their children with an appreciation for the outdoors. Jill grew up in Greenwich and spent time on the farm as a kid. Kevin fell in love with the farm at first sight. They wanted their kids to know how to hunt, fish, play in streams and catch frogs. As Jill put it, "we love that the kids can run around, play outside and just be kids here—that's how kids should grow up." Kevin shares that sentiment: "I

"We are grateful to OSI and The Alfred Z. Solomon Foundation for their leadership and funding support. Through collaborative partnerships we can conserve more fertile farmland in the view shed of the Battlefield."

– Teri Ptacek

#### Plans to Carry on the Family Farming Tradition

The Collins' second goal was to restore the farm to the best of their ability. The original farmhouse, tavern and horse livery were built in 1739. The tavern was destroyed in a fire and the horse livery was taken down years ago but the Collins are working hard to restore the original farmhouse. The milking parlor equipment was shipped to Jill's cousins in Missouri when the dairy operation ceased but Jill and Kevin have already converted the milking parlor into an indoor archery range for the kids. With the funds they received in exchange for putting

a conservation easement on their land, Jill and Kevin are planning to build a new continued on page 4



# 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 15,443 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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ph: 518-692-7285 asa@agstewardship.org www.agstewardship.org

# Help us Save the Historic McArthur-Sauert Farm!

Reflecting on the past, we are humbled by what ASA has accomplished since it was first established 24 years ago. ASA's founders knew that balancing development and growth with the protection of high-quality farmland plays a critical role in ensuring agriculture will have a place in our community and local economy for generations to come.

This summer, in honor of her ancestors (Janette McArthur, Charlie Sauert and their son, Malcolm), Joan McArthur-Fiske hopes to protect the McArthur-Sauert Farm in the Bald Mountain area of the town of Greenwich. This historic farm, a beautiful landmark in Washington County, has been in agricultural production since before the Civil War. The farm was a successful dairy operation for most of the 100 years it has been owned by Joan's family.



The farm's 159 acres of large cultivated fields near the Batten Kill contain some of the richest agricultural soils in the town. This irreplaceable resource now serves primarily as support land for a local dairy

operation. Unfortunately, the McArthur-Sauert Farm is at high risk of being converted to non-agricultural use if not protected. Its close proximity to Saratoga County, extensive road frontage and flat, well drained soils make the property susceptible to development.

When Joan approached ASA, she told stories about what the farm meant to her family and what it has come to mean to her. Joan understands the value of good soils: "With so much good farmland disappearing, where are people going to get their food from in the future?" Housing developments don't need good soils to grow. Food does. How can you argue with that?

Joan is determined that her land stay in farm production. With the funds she will receive in return for conserving her farm, she will start the restoration of the beautiful configuration of roadside 19th Century barns back to their original condition.

To Joan, like so many others, it seems a simple gift, but one that will be enjoyed forever by generations we will never meet. Think about it: conserving land is one of the few lasting and permanent effects you can have on this world. ASA has raised the majority of the funds for this project and Joan is generously donating a portion of her development rights, but we still need to raise the remaining \$7,000. We're counting on help from supporters like you to make this project happen. Please consider making a donation today to protect this treasure. —*Teri Ptacek & Katherine Roome* 

# A Promise is kept with the Conservation of Hawk View Farm

**Donating a Conservation Easement to Maintain a Legacy** 

ary Ellen and Norm
Williams bought Hawk
View Farm (in Greenwich, NY) from Willard Reid in 1977.
From the top of the hill behind the house
to the West is a panoramic view of the
Adirondacks. There is an equally splendid view of the Green Mountains to the
East. Willard told the Williams that once,
while plowing his fields with a team of
horses, he had been able to count 49 other
plow teams from the top of that hill.

The Williams are only the third family to live on the farm. When they bought the house, there was no one living there except wild critters. The house had a foot of water in the basement, early Edison lighting and no insulation. The main draw was the fact that the house and barns had not been modernized.

From whatever angle one views the farm, it's difficult to tell that you have not been transported back to 1840. The Williams restored the house and barns with meticulous attention to detail and 19th Century building techniques.

The original owners, the Dobbins

family, started the farm with only 35 acres. They didn't even own a horse. An additional 130 acres was purchased in 1835. The house and a bigger barn were built and the family prospered. The farm was planted in flax and potatoes with the usual small dairy, pigs, and sheep.

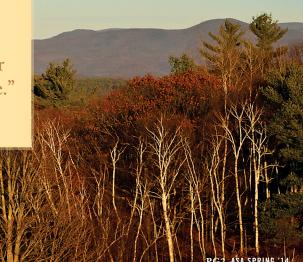
The second family to own the farm, William and Janette McArthur Hutchens, bought the farm in 1873, passing it on to a son, William "Herb" Hutchens. Herb's best friend, Willard Reid, purchased the farm as a tenant farm to support his growing dairy herd. Willard always said that he lived on nearby Christie Road but he made his milk money off the Hutchens Farm. He had a great appreciation for the quality of the soils on this hilly farm.

"It took Willard Reid nine months to decide to sell the farm to us. Much later we found out the reason why he took so long was because he wanted to make sure we were not going to subdivide. I am so happy to make this donation and keep our 'no subdivision' promise."

- Mary Ellen Williams

Norm and Mary Ellen raised a commercial herd of beef cows and registered Percheron horses, all of whose names begin with the "Hawk" prefix. Today, about 70 acres of open fields are leased to a neighboring dairy farm for hay and there is one old Percheron mare left. A herd of rodeo horses spend their summer vacation in the back pastures with fabulous views of Vermont. Actually, the horses have the best views on the whole farm. It is unusual, as was certainly the case in the 1800's, to drive by the farm without seeing a red tailed hawk floating on an updraft over the fields.

A granite bench was built at the top of the hill with a view towards Vermont shortly before Norm died in 2002. Although Mary Ellen travels extensively, she always looks forward to her return and walking to the top of the hill to sit on Norm's bench. It is a lasting satisfaction to her to know that, while not many things last forever, those beautiful views will forever remain as a working landscape in support of our agricultural economy.



#### continued from page 1

barn for livestock and make improvements to several existing structures.

Today most of the farmland is rented to another farmer as support land for a local dairy. But there is still plenty of land for the Collins to expand their small



herd of goats and sheep, used for fiber and milk, and to carry on the family tradition of farming along the Hudson River.

### A Partnership in Conservation

The Open Space Institute (OSI) and the Alfred Z. Solomon Foundation provided the match for the federal funding that made it possible to protect this unique Hudson River farm. ASA and OSI co-hold the easement. Without their help, this land could not have been saved for future generations.

Kitty Highstein Donates 125-acre Easement Honoring her Husband Jene's Love of the Land

"We feel so lucky to have

found this place. It has

embraced us. Conserving

the land is really important

to our whole family and has

been a goal of ours from

the very beginning."

- Kitty Highstein

ver 30
years ago,
while reading the morning
paper, Jene and
Kitty Highstein
saw an interesting property
for sale, a house
and 125-acres of
mostly forested
land located on

Bogtown Road in Salem, NY. While a second home was not in their plans, a place just a few hours from New York City seemed like a perfect weekend getaway. It would also provide some much needed serenity.

What they found on their first visit to the farm was undisturbed beauty. Recalling her first impressions of the property, Kitty said, "We fell in love with it from the moment we saw it. The bog is so beautiful and the animal habitat it creates was very important to us. We knew right then we wanted to preserve this special place."

Each weekend, Kitty and Jene drove north to Salem to spend time making property improvements while maintaining the wildlife habitat that had caused them to fall in love with this property in the first place. Working outside became something they did together, and slowly, it felt more and more like home. They restored the house, cleared overgrown pastures for their sheep and horses, and spent time enjoying the peace, privacy, and

silence they had been missing in the city.

In 1994, Kitty and Jene were able to purchase 38 adjacent acres to ensure that the bog would remain undisturbed forever. Those 38-acres were part of a property that was conserved in 1992 by Rich Carston, ASA's first conservation project.

The Highsteins have owned the farm on Bogtown Road for 30 years. When sons Alex and Jesse were old enough to move out on their own, Kitty and Jene asked them where they felt at home. "The farm is home to us" was their immediate reply. With Jene's passing just one year ago, Kitty, Alex and Jesse decided it was time to conserve the land that had given their family a home, allowed them to appreciate the beauty of the landscape around them and honored Jene's love of the farm.

### The Gordon Christenfeld Family Conserves 148 Additional Acres *on* The Alleged Farm

hen Liz Gordon and Thomas Christenfeld were looking for a home to purchase they had specific criteria in mind. They wanted an old house, about 30 acres of land, and some water. They wanted a pretty setting and it had to be close to Liz's work. The property on Cooke Road in Easton, NY, had all of these things. They soon discovered that the people around them had a sense of history and

were deeply rooted in the community.

With friends and mentors like
George Houser and Louis Marchland,
Liz and Thomas learned about farming, local history and the importance of
protecting the land. "We moved herebecause we like the way it is. The landmarks, the roads and the farms all have
meaning," Liz said. The impact of those

lessons has taught them to be happy,

content and as self-sufficient as possible.

Fifteen years ago Liz and Thomas donated an easement on 116 acres of their farm. With this additional donation they have now protected all 264 acres.

"We want to live in a thriving farm community, that's why we chose to live here. It is important to us to protect the agricultural way of life. ASA gave us the power to keep the land from being developed."

- Thomas Christenfeld

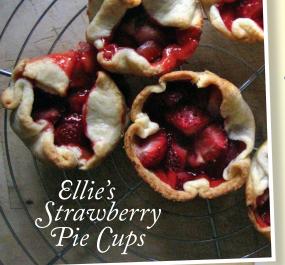


Donnell Hill Farm is tucked into the rolling hills along Route 61 in Jackson. With spectacular views towards the Batten Kill valley and a well-tended cluster of house and barns, it has long impressed many passersby with its scenic charm. Noel and Judy Hanf first fell in love with the property when it was owned and oper-

ated by Vince O'Donnell as a sheep farm and butchery, but couldn't afford to buy it when it went up for sale.

Instead, a couple from Manhattan bought it and subdivided it, intending to sell it off in 5 to 15 acre pieces to people wanting second homes with a great view. Fortunately, their plans did not come to fruition and in 1973 the Hanfs were able

to purchase the farmstead with 14 acres. Gradually, they put the original farm back together, acquiring parcels as they became available. A deep appreciation for their land and respect for the agricultural heritage of the area motivated the Hanfs to donate a conservation easement on 130 acres back in 2007.



For the filling:

2 cups strawberries. hulled and cut in quarters

2 tablespoons sugar

1 tablespoon cornstarch

Combine all the ingredients in a saucepan and bring the mix to a boil. Once it is boiling and the sugar has dissolved, cook for a couple of minutes until fruit is soft but not mushy. Let it cool.

For the pie crust:

2 cups of all-purpose flour

1/2-teaspoon salt

11 tablespoons of cold butter. cut into cubes

4 tablespoons of cold water

3 tablespoons of vinegar

Mix flour, salt, and sugar in the bowl. Cut butter into the flour until it looks like "pea-sized" lumps. (You can also use a food processor for 10 seconds.) Mix water and vinegar together and slowly add these to the flour mixture to moisten the dough so that it holds together. Form a ball, gathering the dough until it holds together. Don't overwork it. Divide the dough in half, wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least 1 hour before using. Cut circles 1-inch wider than your muffin tins out of the dough. Add dough to the tins; fill 3/4 full with strawberry filling. Bake at 375°F for 25 minutes or golden brown. Transfer pies to a wire rack to cool slightly before serving. Serve with whipping cream if desired.

### 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 agstewardship.org and "like" us on Facebook to get all the latest details.

### May through July Farm Photography for Kids

\$10/per child, per session, registration required Visit us agstewardship.org for dates

Learn how to take great photos of your favorite farm animals and agricultural 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 around a farm, and learn how to take great photos. Professional photographers Dona Ann McAdams, Corrina Aldrich, Ellie Markovitch 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 spring and early 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 our Landscapes for Landsake Art Exhibition.

This year we'll be photographing beef cattle, pigs and peacocks at a farm with incredible hilltop views, sheep with their spring lambs, dairy goats and their kids, rare heritage breed pigs and their piglets, and many varieties of dairy cows! You can sign up for one or as many trips as you like but space is limited so register early. Don't miss this great opportunity to document for yourself the beauty and diversity of our community's working farms.

### Weekdays, July 28th through August 8th

The Arts Center of the Capital Region, 9 to 4 p.m.

### Farms. Food and **Photography Camp**

\$475/two week session (camperships available based on need), register at artscenteronline.org

For the second year, ASA is teaming up with The Arts Center of the Capital Region in Troy to offer this unique two-week camp (for ages 8 to 16) focusing on farming, food, and photography. Students will visit four local vegetable and dairy farms to learn about farming operations and to harvest food with their own hands. Back at The Arts Center, teaching artist and cook Ellie Markovitch will help students understand the concept of "farm-to-table" with basic cooking and nutritional skills. 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 relay their experience. The Arts Center will host a food tasting and official exhibition featuring the students' work at August Troy Night Out (August 29th) to remind the community of the important role farms and food play in our lives.

### August 5th

6 to 8 p.m. Gardenworks at MacClan Farms, Salem

### Forever Farms Summer Supper

Tickets on sale in July



We'll be honoring the families who've made a gift to our community by conserving their land at this unique harvest dinner on the farm. Featuring classic picnic fare, 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.

### For information,

directions and registration for all of these events, visit www. agstewardship.org, or call Katie Jilek at 692-7285.

### October 11th through 13th

#### 13th Annual Landscapes for Landsake Art Exhibition

Opening reception: October 11, 2 to 6 p.m.

Gallery hours:

October 12 & 13, Noon to 4 p.m.

ASA's Landscapes for Landsake art exhibition is the premier event of the season and our biggest fundraiser of the year. The show features artwork from more than 30 local artists who've been inspired to capture the beauty of our region's working landscapes. 50% of the proceeds benefit ASA's farmland conservation program. Don't miss the 13th anniversary of this landmark art event!

### October

### 8 to 4 p.m. location TBD Game of Logging

Two level I sessions, \$125 per session, registration required



Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District and ASA are pleased to bring Game of Logging instructors to teach two levels of chainsaw techniques and safety. The Game of Logging is widely acknowledged as the premier timber harvesting training program in the country, offering hands-on training for professionals and nonprofessionals alike. Top instructors from across the country combine demonstration with participation to teach safety, productivity, conservation and cutting techniques.

This valuable training will teach newer and safer aspects of felling techniques, chainsaw reactive forces, bore cutting and pre-planning the fell. Instructors will go over safety features of chainsaws and personal protective equipment. Class size is limited to 10 participants per instructor. Participants are encouraged to bring their own chainsaws and safety equipment but there will be equipment available for those who need it.



PG6 ASA SPRING '14 PG7 ASA SPRING '14

# Thank You for Your Service!

wo members of

our ASA Board departed this year as three new members join us.

We want to extend a heartfelt thanks to Stephan Deibel. As board secretary and chair of the board governance and audit committees, Stephan has kept us organized. His passion for supporting local businesses is inspirational. At the last board meeting he summed up his time perfectly

"When people look back in 200 years they might not

We also want to thank
Stuart Ziehm for his service
on the board over the past
five years. Stepping down to
focus his energy on young
farmer activities, Stuart's
knowledge of farming has
been invaluable to ASA.
We are truly grateful for
his willingness to share his
passion for farming and
farmland protection.

remember me, but they will

remember all of the positive

work of ASA."

We wish our outgoing Board members the best of luck and are confident that they will continue to champion the cause of farmland conservation in our community!

PG8 ASA SPRING '14

### Welcome Aboard!

e're delighted to wel-come Breanna Fulper to the Board. Breanna grew up in a farming family in New Jersey. She is a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones Financial in Greenwich and currently serves on the Greenwich Chamber of Commerce Board. "Growing up on a

farm in New Jersey, I learned early on about the value of land. It is the foundation of all farming. Joining the ASA board allows me to share my passion for farmland conservation with our community and ensure that this valuable resource is protected."

We're also very happy to welcome Sean Quinn to our Board. Sean previously served from 2004 to 2009. As a farmer and co-owner of Kernel Acres Sunset View Farm, a heifer operation in Easton,

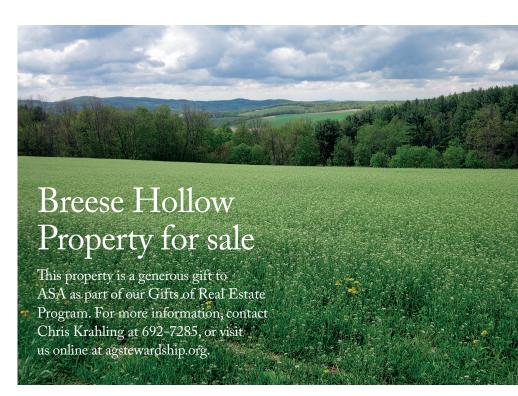
"What keeps me inspired about ASA are the people who want to conserve their land. At the root of each of their stories is a passion for farming and a desire to see the land stay productive."

- Sean Quinn

Sean brings perspective as the owner of a conserved property and as business owner who works with other farmers throughout the region. Sean is the current president of the Northeast Heifer Grower Association, and has served on the boards of the National Dairy Calf Heifer Association, National

Soybean Association Advisory Board and the Agway Regional Board.

We also want to welcome back Mary Ellen Williams. A retired librarian from Greenwich, Mary Ellen, has been a tremendous leader for ASA, giving tirelessly of her time and energy. A member of the board from 2006 to 2011, Mary Ellen has been an active volunteer and supporter of ASA's mission. We are thrilled to have her back as Vice-Chair.



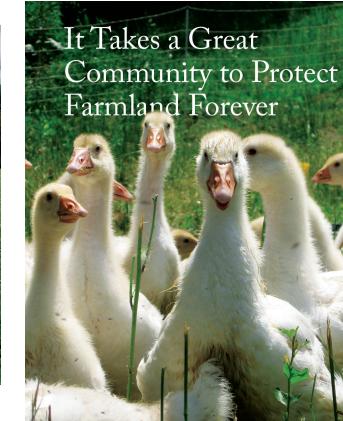


Only 300 raffle tickets will be sold. You may never have better odds of winning the trip of a lifetime!

The winner will receive a two week stay in Brittany, France at a beautiful 16th/17th century granite stone house in Camaret sur Mer. Located 20 minutes from the beach, the house can accommo-

date up to 8 people, has a modern commercial kitchen, a large stone and timber beam living room with a fireplace, four bedrooms, two bathrooms and internet access. Enjoy specialty dishes made with local seafood and fresh produce from surrounding farms. Fly into Brest via Paris and rent a car at the airport.

Tickets are on sale for \$100 each. Entries and payment for entries must be received by 2:30 PM, October 13, 2014. Drawing will be held on Monday, October 13, 2014 at 3:30 PM at ASA's Landscapes for Landsake Art Exhibit at Maple Ridge, Coila, NY. All ticket holders are welcome to attend but need not be present to win.



### Make a donation

In addition to the direct financial help, your contribution demonstrates community support for ASA's conservation efforts, which in turn helps us leverage funding from grants and private sources. Consider becoming a monthly member or giving a gift membership, and be sure to let us know if your employer matches charitable donations.

### Make a legacy gift

Your gift, in the form of a trust, life insurance, stocks and bonds, property, gift annuity or bequest empowers ASA to protect and steward the valuable agricultural resources of our region.

### Volunteer

ASA needs volunteers to help with organizing events and community programs, sending out membership mailings, and providing expertise in professional and technical matters.

### Be an advocate for farmland conservation

Let your family, friends, town officials and state legislators know why you support local farmland conservation.

## Thank You!

Your Support Makes Farmland Protection Possible.

ASA would like to express heartfelt gratitude to our wonderful community of supporters. In these challenging times, your generous contributions and the spirit they reflect mean so much to us.

The following lists include contributions made between October 26, 2012 and April 24, 2013. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information. Please contact us at (518) 692-7285 to note any changes that should be made for the next issue of our newsletter.

#### **Foundations**

Castanea Foundation Farm Aid, Inc. The GE Foundation Gordon Foundation Hedbring Family Foundation Knafel Family Foundation Nordlys Foundation Open Space Institute Price Chopper's Golub Foundation Review Foundation Robert H. Wentorf Foundation, Inc. Verizon Foundation

#### Government

New York State Conservation Partnership Program<sup>3</sup> Rensselaer County

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### Champion

Constance Kheel Noel & Judy Hanf Ann Umlauf & Andrew Brewer

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### Brian Zweig

Mary Withington

Mary & Leo Wong

Steven Kamenii

Elana Yerushalmi Kamenir &

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#### Jeffrey Gaess Legacy Fund

Jerry Burke Margaret & David Horn

#### **Monthly Givers**

Randall Adams Douglas & Linda Bischoff David Hochfelder & Ann Pfau KC Consulting, Rick Kranz & Martha Cullitor Long Days Farm—Deborah Jaffe & Edwin Schiele Tara Nolan J.B. & Louise Sobing Stone Hill Farm—Gregory Hansen Erin Tobin & Roger Bearden

#### In Honor Of Ashley Bridge

Barbara Glaser

Carol Serotta

Cynthia & Kent Wian Luke & Iver Goldrever Carol Serotta Dr. Kenneth Laird Dr. Jeannette Oppedisano Ruth & Sandy Lamb Bonnie Lamb Lori Pelech Carol Conolly Margery Reilly, PA Anonymous Louise & J.B. Sobing Judith & Michael Russert

#### In Memory Of

Gertrude Allen Devin Bulger Joseph I. Randles Ir. Tammy & Patrick Boire William Telford Andland Farms Peggy Piche Felix Wegzyn Paul Wegzyn

#### In-Kind Goods & Services

Capital Tractor Thomas & Diane Jilek King Bakery at Double K Farm Catherine Littell Flo Luckey Mannuccio Mannucci Glenn Nesbitt Tara Nolan Richland Farm Nanson Serrianne Margaret & Steven Silverberg Skellkill Farm Alexander & Marine Zagoreos

#### Volunteers

Deb Balliet Todd Collins Nancy Fitzpatrick Tom Jilek Jurgen Kruger Sharon Kruge Carol Kuhr Jen Lyttle Christine Nemec Randy O'Dell Maddie Skellie Melissa Skellie Bill Thomas Mary Ellen Williams

HARVEST HERO \$5.000 +

CHAMPION \$2,500 - \$4,999

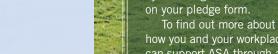
CREAM OF THE CROP \$1,000 - \$2,499

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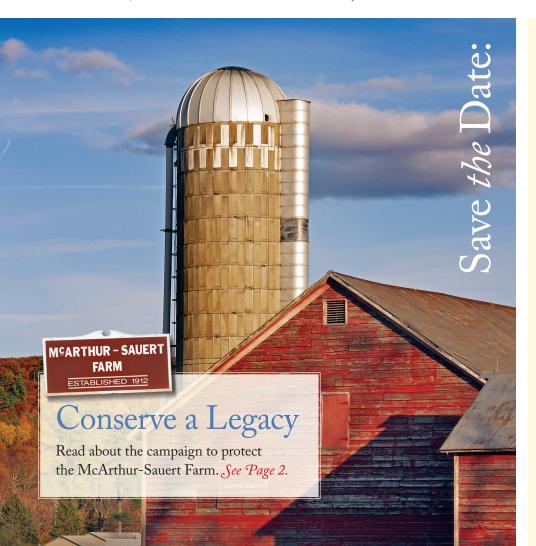
Agricultural Stewardship Association

2531 State Route 40 Greenwich, NY 12834

ph: 518-692-7285 asa@agstewardship.org www.agstewardship.org



PHOTOGRAPHY: Todd Collins, Ellie Markovitch and Lawrence White DESIGN: Ruth Sadinsky



### May-July Farm Photography for Kids

Kids age 8 and up

Learn how to take great photos of your favorite farm animals.

### August 5th

#### **Forever Farms Summer Supper**

6 to 8 p.m. Gardenworks at MacClan Farms, Salem

Tickets on sale in July

We'll be honoring the families who've made a gift to our community by conserving their land with a sumptuous harvest dinner on the farm.

### October 11th-13th

### 13th Annual Landscapes for Landsake Art Exhibition

Opening reception: October 11, 2 to 6 p.m. Gallery hours: October 12 & 13, Noon to 4 p.m.

Don't miss the event of the season. Featuring artwork from more than 30 artists inspired by our working landscapes. 50% of proceeds benefit local farmland conservation!