

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Across the country, Americans have formed more than 1,700 land trusts and worked with landowners to conserve more than 47 million acres of farms, forests, parks and other open spaces. Winnakee is proud to be among a select group - only 342 - of these land trusts to be accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. This means that we meet LTA's national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that our conservation efforts are permanent. The accreditation seal is a true mark of distinction which we received five years ago.

As I stepped aboard as Executive Director in early February, one of my first challenges was to shepherd Winnakee Land Trust through the process of becoming renewing our accreditation status (this must be completed every five years). Accreditation renewal is an opportunity for Winnakee to engage in continuous improvement, to be sure that we stay strong and vibrant and worthy of the confidence and resources that our community entrusts to us. This achievement demonstrates our commitment to permanent land conservation which benefits our entire community.

With high regard for the efforts of the Winnakee staff, Board of Directors, volunteers and friends since its inception in 1989, I am pleased and honored to join the organization at this important juncture.

Gregg Swanzey, Executive Director



EASEMENT SPOTLIGHT ON: CARL MEYER IN RHINEBECK

This property is a gem, one of the few remaining unspoiled, undeveloped parcels in the southern part of the town of Rhinebeck. It boasts mature woodlands, meadows, wetland areas and rock outcroppings, all visible from local roadways. Carl Meyer worked with Winnakee to put his property under easement so that the public could continue to enjoy it, rather than see it broken up into building lots or developed to accommodate a million plus dollar home sitting atop the highest ridge with uninterrupted views to the east and west.

The property is home to all sorts of indigenous wildlife and plant species and includes at least one vernal pool. Years ago, it was used as pastureland and as a result is criss-crossed with stone fences, like those pictured in the photo above, that were painstakingly laid up by farmers to keep their sheep and cows from wandering too far. A "class A" stream (waters used as a source of drinking water) meanders its way through the property, fed by a substantial DEC-designated wetland providing a recharge area for the

Crum Elbow Creek. The property is also adjacent to and at one time was part of Strawberry Hill, a historically significant property in the town.

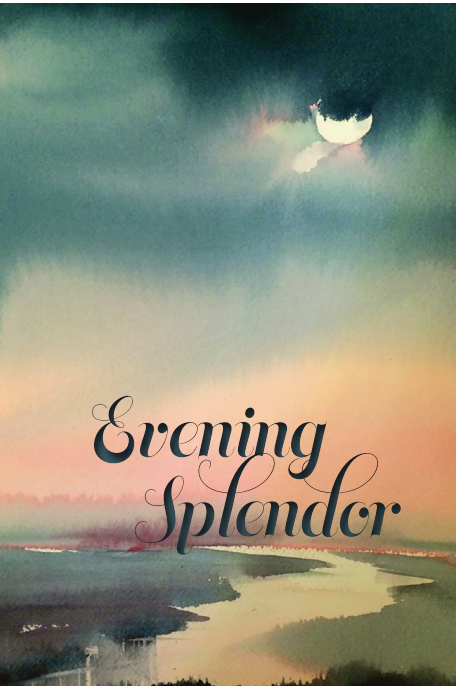
As a Winnakee supporter and active Board member, Carl notes that he "would like to see other undeveloped parcels contiguous to mine placed under easement. It is well known that large unbroken tracts of undeveloped land are beneficial to the well-being and sustainability of indigenous wildlife."

Carl has installed bluebird houses in one of the property's meadows and this spring had two families of nesting bluebirds. He also plans to open up some trails on the property for the enjoyment of his own family and neighboring property owners.

Size of Easement: 71 acres (original parcel placed under easement in 2012, plus recent addition in 2015).

The first in a series of columns that will feature easement properties of the forward-thinking land owners with whom we partner.

ANNUAL GALA AT HISTORIC ASTOR TEA HOUSE JUNE 4TH



Please join us for our annual Gala! This year's event, *Evening Splendor*, will be at the Astor Tea House on Saturday, June 4th. Our guests will enjoy an elegant evening in a stunning location with cocktails, live music, dancing, a silent auction, and a sit-down dinner catered by The Artist's Palate.

The Tea House was added to the Ferncliff estate in 1948 by Vincent Astor. Inspired by the Garden Pavilion at Versailles, it was built as an architectural 'folly' - a place to take tea on the banks of the river. It included a central octagonal room in brick with arch-topped French doors. Over time, the Tea House evolved into a private residence and was purchased by Robert Duffy in 2013.

Robert Duffy is the co-founder and former president of fashion company Marc Jacobs. A collector and connoisseur of architecture and design, Mr Duffy has renovated several properties

Hudson Valley artist and Winnakee supporter Betsy Jacaruso has graciously allowed us to reproduce her original watercolor *Clarion Moon* for our invitation and promotional materials. The original artwork will be available at the Gala.

around the world. Since his arrival at the Astor Tea House property, the river view is once again visible, the stone walls along its borders have been repaired, historic paths through the grounds and gardens have been rediscovered and an octagonal pool house, reminiscent of the original Tea House design, now stands beside the saltwater pool.

We are grateful to Robert Duffy for his generosity in welcoming Winnakee to this exquisite Hudson River estate.

For more info and to purchase tickets, please visit us at winnakee.org or email Karissa at info@winnakee.org

HELP US! JOIN THE SCENIC RESOURCES MAPPING PROJECT



One of the many scenic roadways in our area.

EARTH DAY WITH WINNAKEE AT BURGER HILL!

Each April 22nd is Earth Day and this year, Winnakee began a new tradition to welcome springtime and help beautify Drayton Grant Park at Burger Hill. Volunteers of all ages joined us as we removed over growth in the Crabapple Grove and planted over 50 new spring flowering bulbs. Volunteers were rewarded with lemonade and the best view in town!



Winnakee is working with the Department of Environmental Conservation to map scenic views in Dutchess County and improve how scenic resources are incorporated into regional planning. We need your help! If you visit a scenic location, take a photo and send it to us! Photos must be taken on publicly accessible land in northern Dutchess County and must include their precise location (GPS coordinates can be found using your smart phone). Send photos to info@winnakee.org and your photography may be featured as part of this statewide mapping project!

TIERNEY'S TID BIT: BENEFITS OF THE HUMBLE DANDELION

To many lawn connoisseurs, the word dandelion conjures up disdain. Considered a weed by many, dandelions are an impurity in the most ‘perfect’ of lawns. The common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) originally hails from Europe and Asia, but has become naturalized (plants and animals that live wild in a region where they are not indigenous) in all 50 States, southern Africa, South America, New Zealand, Australia, and India. You may be thinking, “if it’s not native, then it must be an invasive!” But, not all non-natives are invasive, and in some cases these naturalized plants can be quite beneficial.

Dandelions were originally imported as a food crop. In fact, nearly all parts of the plant are edible - salad greens from the leaves, dandelion wine from the flowers, and a coffee substitute can be made from the roots. Tea made from dandelions is said to have numerous medicinal uses as well; it is a registered diuretic in Canada. Humans aren’t the only ones who can derive benefits from this import. As you may know there has been a severe decline in native and non-native bees. Although neonicotinoid insecticides have been largely blamed, habitat loss and the resulting lack of food sources is also a factor in their decline. Particularly in early spring, when bees are first emerging and native wildflowers are scarce, lawn ‘weeds’ such as dandelions can be particularly important. One of the earliest and most abundant spring flowers, dandelions provide nutritious pollen and abundant nectar for bees, birds eat the seeds, and rabbits and other herbivores forage on the highly nutritious leaves.

So, please consider these factors *before* that first lawn mowing of the year until the many species to whom these flowers are so important get a crack at them!

Tierney Rosenstock is Land Projects Manager for Winnakee Land Trust.

**IS YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
UP TO DATE?
WINNAKEE
RELIES ON
MEMBERS LIKE
YOU TO SUPPORT
THE GOOD WORK
WE ARE DOING.
PLEASE, RENEW
TODAY! VISIT
WINNAKEE.ORG**

A botanical illustration of the dandelion. Courtesy, Stichting Academisch Erfgoed.



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NEWSLETTER ~ Spring 2016

THE FIRST 2016 WINNAKEE-DUTCHESS TRAILS ROUNDTABLE

Winnakee has been instrumental in creating a new quarterly Roundtable event which brings together stakeholders from all over Dutchess County to foster trail development on a local and regional scale through networking, information sharing, and enhancing access to financial resources and technical assistance.

On March 17th, the first of the 2016 forums was hosted at the Farm and Home Center of Dutchess County’s Cornell Cooperative Extension. More than 50 people attended from regional trail and land conservation organizations, local and County government, as well as private citizens and business representatives. Featured presentations included Karl Beard of National Park Service speaking on the organization of a county-wide National Trails Day, Daniel Jeanson of Hudson River Valley Greenway who spoke on the Greenway’s 2016 trail-system gap analysis, and Mary Kay Vrba from Dutchess Tourism who outlined the importance of branding to promote a unified trail identity. There were also updates from Scenic Hudson’s Amy Kacala and Dutchess County Planning’s Emily Dozier on the progress of the Beacon Line. The meeting concluded with project updates from local parks, trails, and land conservation organizations.

Our next Roundtable meeting will be hosted on June 23, 2016, location TBA. Our website has a full recap of events. Please email info@winnakee.org to be added to our mailing list and to be notified of future Roundtable events.



Winnakee’s Trails Coordinator, Bryan Roberts welcomes local stakeholders to the first Roundtable of 2016.

**SAVE THE DATE! WINNAKEE’S ANNUAL FUNDRAISING
GALA WILL BE HELD JUNE 4TH - WE HOPE TO SEE YOU
THERE! FOR DETAILS & TICKETS, VISIT WINNAKEE.ORG**



WLT AWARDED \$75K GRANT

Winnakee is proud to be the recipient of a \$75,000 grant from the Land Trust Alliance’s Conservation Partnership Program supported by the Environment Protection Fund. The award was announced on April 19th as part of Earth Week - a week-long celebration of NY’s commitment to protecting our environment, conserving open space and increasing access to New York’s vast and magnificent natural resources.

In the past several years, Winnakee has established itself as a service-oriented land trust, providing advice to planning boards, advocating for landscape-scale resource protection, and lending expertise in mapping and documentation to support landowners in their stewardship of the land.

New research underscores how investing in land conservation and open spaces can boost property values, support local businesses, save taxpayer dollars and protects public health. A winning combination that we are happy to support!