Fulfilling the Promise of the Dvoor Farm

A warm breeze swirls about the Dvoor Farm on a summer’s Saturday. It wanders aimlessly around the barns, kicking up a little dust, before heading east up Mine Street. The early sun slices through the treetops; its light slides across the roof of the old stone farm house like butter spread on toast. The stark white lettering on the horse barn’s gambrel roof – that advertised the Dvoor Bros. stock-raising business – glints, greeting the new day.

Built around 1936, that roof has long served as an iconic landmark to locals and passing motorists. An offhand remark about the building often fires up warm and pleasant memories of Hunterdon County’s cultural heritage.

“My Uncle Charlie worked there for years.…”
“I remember as a kid walking up the brook with the cows there – no one ever bothered us. The good old days.”
“That barn always amazed me as a child.”

While other local landmarks have vanished like ghosts – the victim of neglect or the bulldozer – the Dvoor Farm exists, a tangible fragment of our idiosyncratic story. It remains an unbroken thread in our cultural and historic fabric; something to remind us of our shared and unique sense of place.

And without that sense of where we are, we lose a sense of who we are. The Dvoor Farm and its – our – unique story isn’t just about honoring our past. Hunterdon Land Trust is working diligently to write exciting new chapters to this story, ensuring future generations can enjoy the Dvoor Farm and all the richness it has to offer.

HLT continues making strides in its ambitious goal to rejuvenate the farm into a destination site. With our Master Plan and Historic Site Management Plan as guides, HLT intends to make the Dvoor Farm not just a place where long-time residents recall “the good old days,” but a place where families and friends can make new memories celebrating life’s milestones or enjoying an array of educational or recreational activities.

So far, we completed work on a new ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant bathroom and ramp to allow everyone access to the historic stone farm house. Our refurbished wagon house continues to serve as an ideal venue for small educational programs, events and our winter Farmers’ Market.

We continue applying for grants and seeking funds to improve the farm: sensitively rehabilitating the barns to create event spaces for public and private use (including an educational center); adding safer ways to enter, exit and move about the property; adding amenities like restrooms and signs; and improving the farm’s natural resources with better stormwater management strategies, restoring pollinator meadows, and rejuvenating the old-growth forest.

Once completed, this project will reap a host of benefits to the public and HLT. Visitors can enjoy an array of recreational and educational activities on the farm. Rehabilitating the property will allow us to take a major step toward building our future financial stability, providing us with additional revenue streams to do more to protect the places you love in the Hunterdon County area. And, with a revitalized destination site in the heart of Hunterdon County, we’ll be better able to grow our community and engage our audience with our mission.

More than 20 years ago, the community banded together to preserve this important part of our collective story. Now, we seek to fulfill the promise of the Dvoor Farm. We seek to establish a place that honors and celebrates what Hunterdon County best represents, not just for now, but for the next generation and the one after that. We ask you to help write the next chapters in this ongoing story. Stay tuned for information about this project and how you can make a difference.
You reap the rewards when donating to Hunterdon Land Trust because you enjoy what we all treasure most about our beautiful county: its emerald green meadows that beckon to be explored, its crystal-clean waters that sparkle like diamonds, its breathtaking hillside views where we can marvel at the rich golden hues of a setting sun.

**OUR MISSION**

To preserve and protect the places you love in the Hunterdon County region.

Sure, our annual Farm to Table Dinner invites you to enjoy a perfectly prepared full-course meal amid charming views of the Hunterdon County countryside. But it’s so much more!

It’s a chance to come together and celebrate our shared efforts to protect our agricultural and cultural heritage while enjoying local farm-fresh food masterfully prepared by Chef Matt McPherson of Matt’s Red Rooster Grill, and Nicole Martini of Sweetini’s Cake Shop.

Join us Sunday, Sept. 22, 5 p.m., at the Beaver Brook Country Club in Annandale for a celebration with a purpose. You will enjoy a fabulous evening, complete with a cocktail hour and live music, silent auction, an unforgettable meal, and scintillating conversation with others who share your passion for protecting our county’s special places.

Tickets cost $150 each. All proceeds benefit Hunterdon Land Trust’s work to protect the places you love.

The dinner is your last opportunity to purchase tickets to our raffle for a chance to win a week’s stay at a stunning oceanfront condo on Maui. We will draw the winning ticket at the dinner.

So, come celebrate with us! Reserve your seat by calling Judy Wilson at 908-237-4582 or emailing Judy@hunterdonlandtrust.org.

**HUTERDON LAND TRUST**

**Farm to Table Dinner:** Come Celebrate Your Preservation Victories!

**HLT Seeks Accreditation Renewal**

Hunterdon Land Trust has applied for accreditation renewal with the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance.

HLT first earned accreditation in Aug. 2014, and needed to seek renewal after five years. We submitted the renewal application in May and anticipate the Commission's review will be completed in the fall.

The accreditation renewal process requires HLT to submit extensive documentation and to undergo a rigorous review. Maintaining its accreditation status reaffirms HLT’s commitment to meeting the highest national standards of excellence and shows that our organization is worthy of public trust.

Of approximately 1,700 land trusts nationwide, HLT is one of only about 420 to have earned accreditation. Accreditation is a mark of distinction, assuring all that HLT meets the highest standards for sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance and lasting stewardship.

HLT was incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1996 and has protected 9,580 acres of farmlands, fields and forests toward its goal of preserving 10,000 acres by 2020.
Teaching the Next Generation of Land Stewards

Hunterdon Land Trust Land Steward

Kristin Winters hands Lea-Jade a steel weed wrench. Even though the device weighs about 15 pounds and stands 39 inches high – more than half the height of the eighth-grade girl holding it – she isn’t the least bit intimidated. She clamps the jaws of the orange-colored wrench around the root of some multiflora rose – a particularly prevalent plant that invades fields and crowds out native plant species – before giving it a good tug.

“Pull back a little bit farther... a little more,” Kristin coaches. The girl leans back until a ripping sound and a pop signal the root getting yanked from the earth. “Great work! That one’s definitely out of the ground. Now do you want to show Jack how to use it?”

This summer HLT worked with several groups of young teens from the Center for FaithJustice in Lawrenceville, teaching the next generation how to protect the places we love and helping instill a deep appreciation for the environment.

The kids traveled to the Dvoor Farm and Quakertown Preserve in Franklin Township as part of the Center for FaithJustice’s summer program that aims to promote social justice.

Julia Amting arrived here from her home state of Michigan to volunteer as a group leader for CFJ. She said this Catholic-based program is geared toward teaching kids about social justice by having them work with a number of organizations – like HLT – that are working to make their community a better place. “They’re learning that taking care of the environment is an important part of social justice,” she said.

At Quakertown, the middle-school students learned how to stay safe on the preserve and to identify ticks and poison from the earth. “Great work! That one’s definitely out of the ground. Now do you want to show Jack how to use it?”

At Quakertown, the middle-school students learned how to stay safe on the preserve and to identify ticks and poison ivy. Kristin also taught them how to safely use loppers and pruners, and the best way to cut and dispose of the multiflora rose, which straddled the areas between the woods and fields.

The youngest also helped with HLT’s ash tree inventory, monitoring the damage posed by the exotic invasive Emerald Ash Borer, a bug that is killing ash trees throughout the state. Documenting the location and condition of trees on HLT preserves will help us determine how to confront the EAB threat.

Kristin led the group into the Bodine Woods and taught the kids to look for diamond-shaped bark and opposite compound leaves of five to seven leaflets. When the kids correctly identified an ash tree, one youngster tagged the tree, while another recorded the results on a spreadsheet.

During their hikes at Quakertown and Dvoor, Kristen would point out various plants and creatures of interest. A praying mantis drew a collection of “oohs” and “ahhs.” She taught them to spot the differences in the bark of a number of trees – including a large sycamore on the Dvoor Farm – and encouraged them to smell invasive mugwort to discover its strong, spicy aroma.

The kids proved quite knowledgeable about their environment, having learned about invasive plants in their science classes.

“I was surprised by how much they knew,” said Julia, a sophomore at Central Michigan University: “They seem to be learning a lot more in middle school about the environment around them, than even I did when I was in middle school.”

Lea-Jade, the first student who handled the weed wrench, said her favorite part of the day was using the tool. “That was a lot of fun,” she said. “I also liked learning about the different species that are bad for the land.”

“I think it’s great that these kids could take something that they learned in the classroom, and be able to apply it to the world around them. That’s important,” Kristen said. “The more they become involved in caring for our environment, the better it will be for them, the community and the world,” she added.

Volunteers who worked at Quakertown Preserve (from left): Group leader Julia Amting, Jack, Molly, Maggie and Lea-Jade.

Molly cuts up multiflora rose at the Quakertown Preserve.

Calling all Volunteers: Help Protect the Places You Love!

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our nonprofit organization!

Hunterdon Land Trust is always seeking help to maintain our trails, remove invasive plants or inventory ash trees on our preserves; to assist with various tasks in our office; or to lend a hand at our Sunday Farmers’ Market.

If you’d like to help, please contact Judy Wilson, our director of administrative and social affairs, at 908-237-4582 or judy@hunterdonlandtrust.org.
Richard Dalrymple feels a deep connection to the Kingwood farm his family recently preserved. And with plenty of good reasons.

The Dalrymple family arrived in Kingwood from Hoboken in the 1890s, and has owned the farm ever since, passing it down from generation to generation.

“My dad was born in the kitchen,” he said, pointing to the two-story white farmhouse that has witnessed so much of his family’s history. “I have so many wonderful memories here. I love Hunterdon County and Kingwood Township, and I wanted this farm to stay in the family, and hopefully my kids will raise their kids here someday.”

Dalrymple and his brother, Brian, recently preserved the 52-acre farm thanks to the combined efforts of several organizations including Hunterdon Land Trust (HLT).

HLT became involved when Kingwood Township needed help obtaining funds for the preservation. HLT wanted to lend a hand largely because the farm, located off State Highway 12, borders the Little Nishisakawick Creek, which meanders westerly before meeting the Delaware River.

HLT has been very active in this part of the county. It has preserved several farms in the area totaling hundreds of acres, establishing a corridor of protected farmland as part of a larger greenbelt of preserved land. It is also in the early stages of working to preserve three other farms near the Dalrymple tract.

“Part of Hunterdon Land Trust’s mission is to ensure our agricultural heritage endures for generations to come, and preserving the Dalrymple farm protects another link in this area’s bucolic landscape,” said Patricia Ruby, HLT’s executive director.

The first Dalrymple to plant roots in Kingwood Township was Richard’s great-grandfather; James Dalrymple, who purchased the land from Calvin and Emma Dull in 1893. Richard Dalrymple still has a copy of the deed from when his grandfather inherited the farm in 1902.

Dalrymple’s grandfather farmed the land, and passed it on to his son, who initially farmed, but later worked as an excavator and union carpenter. “My Dad would help the farmer – who was a family friend – with plowing the fields, planting and with the harvest.

“It’s vital to preserve and protect our family farms because once they’re gone, they’re gone forever. Hunterdon Land Trust has been awesome helping us preserve ours.”

– Richard Dalrymple
The Eisenberger Property:  
Saving a Pristine Forest in Bethlehem Township

Ninety-eight acres of mostly pristine, verdant forest untouched by churning plow or digging backhoe, and not decimated by hungry deer… in New Jersey?

It doesn’t happen very often! And best of all, these acres off Ludlow Station Road in Bethlehem Township will remain unspoiled for generations to come.

It’s very rare in Hunterdon County these days to encounter such a healthy forest because heavy deer browse often paves the way for a carpet of invasive species, but this preserve has an abundance of native plants in the understory and few invaders. The fact that these woods were never cleared for agriculture and have remained essentially untouched played a huge role in how healthy they still are today.

“We target land for preservation based on the impact that landscape will have,” said our Executive Director Patricia Ruby. “This particular property was a priority because its unusually healthy forest provides clean water and resilient native wildlife habitat.”

This land offers an ideal setting for passive recreation. An existing trail slopes uphill through a charming deciduous forest, rewarding hikers with stunning views of surrounding mountains and open fields. The property is also near the Tower Hill and Charlestown reserves – both owned by Hunterdon County – creating the possibility of someday linking several trails.

Another compelling reason to preserve the land is its adjacency to a tributary of the Musconetcong River, which feeds into the Delaware. Protecting the watershed of the Musconetcong – one of only five federally-designated Wild and Scenic Rivers in New Jersey – also furthers the efforts of the Delaware River Watershed Initiative (DRWI), primarily funded by the William Penn Foundation.

The DRWI is among the nation’s largest non-regulatory conservation efforts, involving 65 non-governmental organizations – including Hunterdon Land Trust – working together to protect and restore clean drinking water in the Delaware River watershed, the source of drinking water for 15 million people in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

HLT purchased the land from Princeton resident Peter Eisenberger, who had owned it for more than 25 years. HLT and Bethlehem Township kicked in New Jersey State Green Acres money; Hunterdon County awarded the project a grant, the William Penn Foundation provided key support, and The Nature Conservancy contributed funds for closing costs and technical reports.

“All these organizations played an important role in making this preservation possible – we can’t thank them enough,” said Jacqueline Middleton, our Land Acquisitions Director.

After preserving the land, HLT transferred ownership of the property to Hunterdon County who will manage it.

Thanks to Our Partners in Preservation

We extend our deepest gratitude to our Partners in Preservation:


Please support the businesses that support HLT!
Carpenter bee builds her nest’s partitions with a particleboard-like substance formed from sawdust and her own saliva. Sweat bees are the smallest in New Jersey, measuring less than one centimeter long, and are named for their attraction to human sweat. And bumblebees don’t need the gym. That ‘buzz’ you hear them make is the bee vibrating its muscles to shake a flower’s pollen grains loose.

Not that bees don’t take breaks. The male squash bee naps in the flowers he pollinates, then has to chew his way out of the shriveled bloom the next day. Some local bees have other unusual habits. Female rose-mallow bees can walk on water. The polyester bee lines the egg pockets in her nest with a natural cellophane-like secretion that she seals up like a Ziploc bag. This material, which allows the bee to build her ground nest in wet areas, has been studied as a naturally decomposing plastic substitute.

Honey bees are essential to our food production. And even though native bees usually live alone or in smaller groups, they also play a vital role in our native ecosystems as pollinators to many plants and food crops. They forage earlier or later in the day and during wetter or cooler conditions than honey bees. Many native bees’ zigzag flight pattern also increases the chances of cross pollination.

Both honey bee and native bee populations have been declining. The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation lists 16 North American bees as vulnerable, four as imperiled, and 31 as critically imperiled, including nine that may be extinct. Even though these seem like small numbers compared to 4,000, the threats to these few will affect the others.

Local bees in danger include the cuckoo bee, the yellow-banded bumble bee, and the rusty-patched bumblebee, whose numbers have declined by an estimated 86%. Threats to all bees include agricultural and urban development, fragmentation and destruction of habitat, mites and diseases, insecticide use, replacement of important flowers by invasive plants and changes in climate.

How can we provide habitat for bees? For food, grow native plants that flower in different seasons to provide longer-lasting sources of pollen and nectar. Line property edges with flowering plants and shrubs or, if the neighbors don’t mind, let them grow “wild” to provide food for pollinators. Check sites like https://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1280/ for lists of plants beneficial to bees.

For shelter, leave small piles of well-drained, excavated soil for ground-nesters. Build a bee box from unfinished wood or leave dead stumps in place for wood-nesting bees. Limit or eliminate pesticide use and spray in the evening when bees are not active.

One of the most important ways to help bees is to preserve land! You can see the benefits preserved land offers simply by visiting the pollinator meadow here at the Dvoor Farm, where bees can be found buzzing about the milkweed.

Studies described on xerces.org have found that for some New Jersey, Canadian and Californian crops, protecting 25% to 30% of the land as natural habitat allows 100% of the pollination needs of that crop to be met. Native bees nest in the natural areas and fly into the fields to pollinate the crops. When we work together to preserve farmland and neighboring natural spaces, we’re helping some of our smallest partners – the bees!
You Can Leave the World – and Your Community – a Better Place

Jane C. Kitchin, a long-time Flemington resident, remembered Hunterdon Land Trust when making her legacy giving plans. She considered herself a very private person.

“Everything you need to know about her you can find in her obituary,” stresses her niece, Lois Stewart.

So, if you search online, here’s what you will learn: Jane was born on Oct. 18, 1920 to Willis and Freda Karle Carver. She lived most of her life in Hunterdon County, graduating from Lambertville High School in 1936 before working for a decade at the Flemington Auction Market. She married Harold Kitchin, and had one son, Richard, both of whom died before Jane. She lived 96 years, passing away on Dec. 17, 2016.

Jane’s obituary does tell you many things. But it leaves out one important detail: Though Jane went about her affairs privately and quietly, her actions and compassion toward the causes she cared about spoke volumes. She wanted to create a legacy to support the organizations – like HLT – working for the things in which she believed.

Planned giving, or legacy giving, lets others know that while you lived, you cared. That you saw good in the world, and in the organizations doing good deeds, and wanted to achieve your legacy through them. It shows you wanted to leave the world a better place.

Your gift to Hunterdon Land Trust ensures that you are protecting the places you love in the Hunterdon County area. That you treasure our rural heritage and cultural landscapes. That you want others to have clean air and water, and the chance to enjoy all the sweet rewards nature has to offer. And that you want to protect our precious wildlife.

But leaving the world a better place doesn’t come with just the snap of a finger. Planned giving takes – well, planning!

You can start creating your legacy and protecting the places you love by remembering Hunterdon Land Trust. Just like Jane Kitchin did.

To learn more, please visit our website at www.hunterdonlandtrust.org. We welcome your questions by emailing our Executive Director Patricia Ruby at pruby@hunterdonlandtrust.org or calling her at 908-237-4582. And, if you do remember HLT in your planned giving, please let us know.

Other ways to give:

Matching Gifts: Make the most of your gift to Hunterdon Land Trust. Many companies will match the charitable gifts of their employees. Check with your employer to see if it has a matching gift program. Most corporate procedures are simple: Just request a Matching Gift Form from your company and submit it to Hunterdon Land Trust along with your gift.

Monthly Giving: Become an Evergreen Partner, our monthly giving program that automatically charges your credit card in the amount you specify.

You can also make a gift to HLT by enclosing a check in the envelope included in this newsletter or make a secure online donation at www.hunterdonlandtrust.org/get-involved.

HLT Website Gets a Makeover

As this issue of Conservation Matters goes to press, HLT is about to launch its redesigned website.

While you will still find us at www.hunterdonlandtrust.org, you’ll discover plenty of changes including improved organization, stunning videos showcasing the places you love, and a design that works well on both mobile and desktop platforms.

John Gattuso, former HLT Board of Trustees president and owner of Gattuso Media Design, did an incredible job updating the website’s look and feel, and we can’t thank him enough for all his hard work.

We invite you to check out the website soon. We’re confident you’ll love what you see!
Make the Smart Choice: Visit Our Farmers’ Market

You can find many things at our Farmers’ Market. But here are a few you’d be hard pressed to find:

- High Fructose Corn Syrup
- Bananas (Yes, we have no bananas… because you can’t grow them in the Hunterdon County area.)
- BHA, BHT, TBHQ or any of the other in the cauldron of alphabet soup that comprises various petroleum-synthetic food colorings.
- Pineapples (but you can go pick your own if you enter our raffle and win a week’s stay at an oceanfront condo in Maui. You can buy tickets at our Farmers’ Market or at our Farm to Table Dinner on Sept. 22. See page 2 for more about the dinner.)

So many times when you shop for food, you have to make 1,001 smart choices. But we think all you really need to make is one: Visit our Farmers’ Market every Sunday!

At our market, you’ll find a terrific selection of local and organic fruits and vegetables; grass-fed beef; all-natural chicken, pork and yak; fresh-baked bread; cave-ripened cheese; homemade butter; honey; locally roasted coffee, refreshing bubble teas and nitro cold brews; fresh-cut flowers; native plants; vegan burgers; all-natural pet treats and more. And if you’re hungry, you can grab a flatbread pizza or salad made with farm-fresh ingredients or a pastry and enjoy it while listening to live music.

We take great pride in running a producers-only market, which means we feature local farmers and vendors who sell only products they grow, raise or produce themselves. It’s our way of guaranteeing you authenticity, freshness and quality every time you shop with us.

Fall: The Perfect Time to Visit

We encourage you to check out our market this fall, open every Sunday through Nov. 24 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Fall is a great time to shop at our market. Sure, you’ll find all the standard fall produce like root vegetables, broccoli, garlic, pumpkins and apples. But you will also find tomatoes, peaches and a variety of spring greens such as kale, spinach, arugula and lettuce.

You’ll also find some great programs coming up this fall:

- Sept. 29, 10:30 a.m.: Prohibition and New Jersey with Brian Armstrong: We’ll toast the centennial anniversary of Prohibition with this program that discusses the unforeseen consequences of the “noble experiment” and includes some interesting tales from Hunterdon County and surrounding environs.
- Oct. 13: Join us for Artisan’s Sunday featuring local crafters, woodworkers, jewelry makers and more. At 11 a.m. Historic Preservationist Carla Cielo will discuss stories that shaped the lives of our ancestors. We’ll also have a free photography workshop with Dwight Hiscano at 11 a.m.
- Nov. 24: Our annual Holiday Farmers’ Market will have everything you need for the perfect Thanksgiving.

We also have Farmers’ Market yoga every Sunday with either Lauren Theis, Beatriz Velasquez or Lisa Perry. Check www.hunterdonlandtrust.org for details.

Winter Farmers’ Market

Don’t forget our Winter Farmers’ Market, which runs the first and third Sunday of every month from December to mid-May. The market is held in our wagon house from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Grants Help Fund HLT Events

Our robust Farmers’ Market programming, and our Conservation Conversations were supported by The Tyler Foundation. Our Historic Delaware River Series was supported by the National Park Service’s Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Program, which aims to protect the natural, cultural and historic value of the Delaware River. We thank them both for their generous support!