

Westchester Land Trust



Profiles of People Fulfilling the Promise of Farming Forever



Meet Your Neighbors
Helping Neighbors -
Learn How You Can Help

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Family Farm Festival
on Saturday,
September 14th!

~ See Insert ~



Farmers + Land =
A Match
Made in Heaven

~ 5 ~

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SPECIAL THANKS

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Westchester Land Trust (WLT) is a member of EarthShare, a nationwide network of America's most respected environmental and conservation charities. You and your employer can support WLT through an EarthShare workplace giving campaign. Visit earthshareny.org or contact Michelle Pleim at michelle@westchesterlandtrust.org or 914.234.6992 ext. 22 to learn more.

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Number: 77308.

Cover: Sonya Ennis and her daughter Jada Ennis give back to the community through volunteering at WLT. Turn to page 3 to learn more!

Photo by Zoraida Lopez-Diago

FROM WLT ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER ELLEN BEST



Dear Friends,

I've been digging into the earth as far back as I can remember – first as a young gardener alongside my parents – straight through to today. I have always believed that stewarding the land, especially on a grassroots and local level, benefits all members of our region by increasing access to nutrient rich food, improving the quality of our air and water and protecting the places animals call home. These are the reasons I am so passionate about land conservation and am committed to the mission of **Westchester Land Trust (WLT)**.

Thanks to your support, WLT can “walk the talk,” and put our words into action. With this in mind, we're sharing stories in this publication about the many ways your

contributions have allowed WLT to advance farmland protection, stewardship, and give back to our community. These stories are just a few examples of what makes me proud to serve as a member of WLT's leadership and volunteer at Sugar Hill Farm.

As you read through these stories, please know that we are most grateful to you, our generous supporters who help us keep farming alive and well in the region. We cannot thank you enough for your passion, enthusiasm and contributions to our collective effort to promote and protect our agricultural heritage.

Thank you for digging in with us,

Ellen Best
WLT Advisory Board Member
Westchester/NYC Chapter - Bionutrient Food Association

INSIDE THE NEWSLETTER



Stories of Impact

Meet your neighbor Louisa on page 3. Learn how you can help her and nearly 2,000 families in need through volunteering at WLT's Sugar Hill Farm.



A Fresh Way To Fresh Food for All

Learn how we've put our headquarters on the popular **Pollinator Pathway** (page 5) and are fostering the next generation of farmers as a partner in the **Hudson Valley Farmlink Network**.



Put Me On The Fridge

See the insert detailing upcoming WLT programs that'll have you enjoying the outdoors – including our second annual Family Farm Fest on September 14th! We hope you can join us for food, festive games, free samplings of Betsy Stuart's famous Brown Betty (apple crisp) and more.

**WLT
Volunteers Dig
In to Provide
Nutritious Food
for Northern
Westchester
Neighbors.**



1 Allison and WLT volunteers plant, weed and water the Sugar Hill Farm garden.



2 Allison and the volunteers harvest produce and wash off soil and debris.



3 Together, they load up their cars and drop off the delivery to CCNW.



ROOTED IN GOODNESS

**Fresh from Sugar Hill Farm
into the Hands of Your Neighbor**

On a typical Tuesday afternoon, Louisa, your northern Westchester neighbor gratefully selects fruits and veggies, puts them in her grocery cart and continues to shop. “My daughter loves choosing the produce to take home for her siblings,” says Louisa, noting that cucumbers and peppers are her daughter’s favorites. Louisa’s daughter smiles from ear to ear in agreement. Louisa isn’t at the nearest grocer or farmers market, she is picking up food for her family at the Community Center of Northern Westchester (CCNW), an organization that has been providing food and clothing support to our neighbors in need for over 25 years.

Earlier this year, Westchester Land Trust, the Community Center of Northern Westchester and D.I.G. Farm joined

together and set sights on tackling access to fresh, nutritious produce by growing vegetables at WLT’s Sugar Hill Farm in Bedford Hills. All produce grown and harvested will directly service Louisa, her family, and nearly 2,000 families in our neighborhoods who rely on CCNW’s food pantry for fresh fruit and vegetables.

Westchester Land Trust’s previous 8-year partnership with Feeding Westchester established a food growing program that yielded an average of 8,000 servings of fresh food each season. Through this new collaborative the transport of produce is a shorter distance, reducing the carbon footprint of the program.

But we need your help! “Volunteers are the key to the success of this program,” says Allison Turcan, founder and farmer of D.I.G. Farm in North Salem who co-leads the program. “No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome to join us; we’ll teach you all you’ll need to know!” Many volunteers who come to help in the garden are interested in starting a garden on their own property but aren’t quite sure where to start. The lessons learned while lending a hand at Sugar Hill Farm are invaluable to a gardener hoping to expand their knowledge of gardening.

Longtime WLT volunteer Sonya Ennis of Yorktown Heights agrees. “As a community leader, I know the benefits of growing food and know volunteering at Sugar Hill Farm is a great vehicle to bring us all together in more ways than one,” says Sonya. “Helping my neighbors makes me feel so good. I especially enjoy knowing that gardening at WLT’s Sugar Hill Farm can empower those in need to learn the art of farming and prepare healthy, nutritious farm-to-table meals for their families.”

With your support, WLT can make a big difference to combat food insecurity right here at home while demonstrating that a significant amount of food can be grown on a modest-size parcel of land. Together, we can ensure that farmland stays in production, is considered for permanent protection whenever possible and makes a tangible impact on the health of members in our community.

What is Food Insecurity? The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life.



**1 in 5 residents in
Westchester County is
FOOD INSECURE**

How food insecurity impacts health and wellbeing:

Food Insecurity in adults can result in the development of chronic disease, including:

- hypertension;
- hyperlipidemia;
- diabetes.

Food Insecurity in children can lead to:

- increased rates of iron-deficiency anemia;
- acute infection;
- chronic illness;
- and developmental and mental health problems.

Source: CDC, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey



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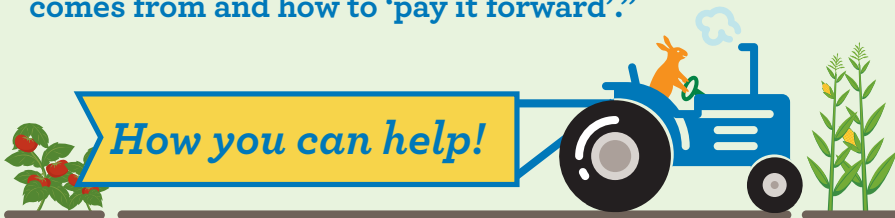
Once the produce is delivered, CCNW volunteers weigh it and then stock shelves with the produce or store it in their walk in cooler until it is needed.



5

Families like Louisa's, select produce and receive the healthy fruits and veggies they need.

“Volunteering at WLT’s Sugar Hill Farm is rewarding in so many ways,” says Ken Needleman of White Plains. “All ages benefit from gardening and giving back. This truly is a great way to teach all in our community where food comes from and how to ‘pay it forward’.”



- **Bring a group to volunteer at the farm.**
Does your workplace encourage giving back to the community? Schedule a corporate day at the farm today.
- **Help deliver food to the Community Center.**
- **Donate gardening materials** such as harvest baskets, gloves or hand pruners.
- **Be a weekend/weekday evening water warrior!**
Water our garden during the hot summer months when the garden needs it most.

Sign up to learn more and to volunteer by contacting Kristen O’Hara, Westchester Land Trust’s Conservation Program Coordinator at 914.234.6992, ext. 15 or Kristen@westchesterlandtrust.org.

Join us, Allison, and volunteers including Sonya and Ken as we work side-by-side to grow and harvest fresh food at WLT’s Sugar Hill Farm for your neighbors like Louisa, who need it most.



See WLT’s calendar for a complete list of upcoming Sugar Hill Farm volunteer dates.

WLT’S 2019 ANNUAL BENEFIT A True Farm-to-Table Experience

Finding land and financing was an issue for Jenny Elliott and her partner, Luke Franco, who were living in Brooklyn, but dreaming of becoming farmers in the Hudson Valley. In 2011, they left the City, completed a farm internship and got their start by participating in the Westchester Land Trust Farmland Match Program. This program connects farmers without land with willing property owners who have a few acres available for agriculture.



Through this program, which we call “VegChester,” Jenny and Luke’s Tiny Hearts Farm was born, on an acre of land on figure skating legend Dick Button’s property in North Salem.

Since then, Tiny Hearts Farm has expanded to operating a 22-acre farm in Copake, NY, a showroom and a studio which offers classes on gardening and arranging flowers. “If it weren’t for the Westchester Land Trust, we wouldn’t be a farm today,” remarks Jenny.

Because of you, we can support Farmland Match Program participants like Jenny and Luke and were thrilled to source the centerpiece flowers at our 2019 Annual Benefit from Tiny Hearts Farm.



Learn more about how WLT is linking farmers to land **PAGE 5**

We are grateful to the following local farms who donated goods from their harvests to the “Farm Fresh” basket featured in our Annual Benefit Silent Auction: Hardscrabble Farm, Kitchawan Farm, Fable Farm, Snow Hill Farm, Mill Pond Farm, Stuart’s Fruit Farm, Tiny Hearts Farm and Ryder Farm.

Here’s to success, partnership and supporting farmers across the region!!!

E-FARM-ONY

How WLT Plays “Matchmaker” Through Connecting Property Owners and Farmers

Did you know, small farms—with about 25 acres or less—produce over 70 percent of the world’s food? Or that small farms are instrumental to our economy and well-being as well as protecting and enhancing natural resources and the environment?

“VegChester!” our farmland match program, is celebrating its 10-year anniversary this season. The program’s goal is to ensure that land with agricultural value stays in production, is considered for permanent protection, and that young and beginning farmers who might not have the resources to purchase land in Westchester, have the opportunity to farm here.

VegChester! is a sponsor of the Hudson Valley Farmlink Network (HVFN), an organization that maintains a powerful website wherein:

- Landowners post **Farm Opportunity Listings** so farmers in need of land can find them! Farmers can search the listings by province, and apply filters for soil type, production history, available housing, infrastructure and more.
- Farmers can create **Farm Seeker Profiles** and define land and infrastructure needs, desired region, business interests, farming experience and more.

With your support of Westchester Land Trust and VegChester!, we can ensure that farmers like Chef Desi Colon (profiled below) who might not be able to purchase land in Westchester, will have the opportunity to grow produce and/or raise livestock.



Meet Chef Desi Colon, an HVFN farmer who is looking for land in our region.

Chef Desi Colon has a true farm-to-table approach and has been perfecting his culinary craft for over three decades. In addition to being a chef, Desi converts small suburban yards into highly productive farm plots.

Desi joined HVFN looking for land for his farm, Hailey’s Acres. His five-year plan is to build a sustainable organic farm that will use a no-till system, produce nutritional food and incorporate natural carbon reformation systems.

Join us as we work together to ensure that farmland remains for the next generation of farmers like Desi. Contact Kara Whelan, WLT’s Vice President at 914.234.6992 ext. 12 or Kara@westchesterlandtrust.org today to learn more.



DESI’S FAVORITE SUMMERTIME RECIPE

Broccoli Rabe with Orecchiette Pasta

INGREDIENTS

- 10 cloves of garlic, sliced
- 2 bunches of broccoli rabe, trimmed
- ¾ pound orecchiette pasta
- 1 pound sweet sausage crumble (optional)
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup grated parmesan cheese
- Salt and Pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Start by blanching trimmed broccoli rabe in boiling salted water for 1 – 2 minutes. Cool in ice bath drain and set aside.
2. Precook orecchiette pasta al dente. Cool on ice bath, drain and set aside.
3. Heat sauté pan medium high then add oil.
4. When oil is hot, lightly brown garlic and sausage crumble (optional).
5. Add broccoli rabe, toss and heat. Be sure to coat with hot oil, add pasta and gently toss.
6. Season with fresh ground black pepper, salt, and top with Parmesan (optional).



Pollinators Need Us and We Need Pollinators

Bees, butterflies, beetles, birds, bats and other small mammals that pollinate plants are responsible for bringing us one out of every three bites of food. Unfortunately, pollinator populations are declining at alarming rates due to factors including a changing climate, pesticides and parasites. Want to help pollinators and create a “buzz” in your community?

Contact Kristen at Kristen@westchesterlandtrust.org or visit pollinator-pathway.org to learn more about Pollinator Pathway, a grassroots initiative that works to establish pollinator-friendly habitat and food sources for pollinating insects and wildlife throughout our community.

No space is too small to make a difference!



**PUTTING EGGS IN ONE BASKET
 TO SUPPORT WLT**

**How Friends of WLT are Supporting Land
 Conservation, One Egg at a Time**

For close to ten years, Westchester Land Trust supporter and conservation easement donor Virginia DiGuglielmo has raised chickens on her Cross River property. “The decision to raise chickens was pretty easy,” says Virginia. “My son loved Caesar Salads when he was little and I could only safely make the dressing with fresh and unprocessed eggs. Most grocers didn’t have many highly nutritious and natural egg options back then, so my husband and I decided to raise chickens. I always say, ‘go big or go home,’ so we dove right in by building a fully enclosed chicken house and purchased 25 hens!” Eggs that the DiGuglielmo family did not consume were given to neighbors.

Six years ago, Virginia’s daughter thought it would be a good idea to have friends and family buy the fresh eggs and donate all proceeds to charities and causes. Over the years, the DiGuglielmo’s have donated to organizations both near



and far. In 2019, they chose WLT! We cannot thank Virginia and her family enough for choosing to donate to WLT, an organization dedicated to protecting the health of our community, forever.

We encourage you and your family to consider donating to WLT in any way you can! Complete the donation form below and mail to WLT today or contact Michelle, WLT’s Development and Special Events Coordinator at 914.234.6992 ext. 22 or michelle@westchesterlandtrust.org to learn more about giving opportunities.

 **You’re a vital part of the story. Ensure farms that provide us with fresh, healthy, and local food, will be protected forever.**

I would like to contribute

- \$25 \$50 \$250 \$500 Surprise Us \$.....

I would like to make a pledge of

- Monthly Quarterly Bi-annually
 My gift is in honor/memory of
- I have enclosed/will send a matching gift form from my employer.
- I wish my gift to remain anonymous.
- I would like to learn more about including Westchester Land Trust in my will.

WLT is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Name

Address

City **State** **Zip**

Phone

Email

*Entering my email indicates my consent to receive occasional enews from Westchester Land Trust. We never share this information. Mail check made out to **Westchester Land Trust** to WLT, 403 Harris Road, Bedford Hills, NY 10507. For other ways to give, including by credit card, visit us online at: westchesterlandtrust.org*

Westchester Land Trust

SUMMER-FALL 2019 EVENTS

Join us to learn about conservation while having a great time with family and friends! Visit westchesterlandtrust.org or contact Kristen at 914.234.6992 ext. 15 or kristen@westchesterlandtrust.org for more info and to RSVP.

Friday August 23 8:00 PM - 9:30 PM		Night Sky Story Walk Pine Croft Meadow Preserve 102 Mead Street Waccabuc	All Ages & Their Families - Join us and our friends from Lewisboro Library for a flashlight walk (with a story telling twist) and stargazing at WLT's Pine Croft Meadow Preserve!
Saturdays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 27 August 31 September 28 10 AM - 1 PM		Family Garden Days Sugar Hill Farm 403 Harris Road Bedford Hills	Come help a garden grow! Bring your whole family to Sugar Hill Farm to help WLT Farm Coordinator Allison and WLT staff grow fresh food for our friends at the Community Center of Northern Westchester. Discover where veggies come from and learn organic gardening techniques. At 11:30 AM, we'll take a break for a quick cooking lesson with vegetables right out of the garden!
Sunday September 14 4 PM - 7 PM		Family Farm Festival Stuart's Fruit Farm 62 Granite Springs Road Somers	FREE for the whole family! Join us (rain or shine) as we celebrate the permanent protection of the oldest working farm in Westchester County, Stuart's Fruit Farm. There will be food trucks, hay rides, live music, apple crisp, games, raffles, and more!
Sunday September 29 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM		Ramble in the Woods Westchester Wilderness Walk/ Zofnass Family Preserve 258 Upper Shad Road Pound Ridge	Join WLT staff and Paul Zofnass* on a guided hike through WLT's Westchester Wilderness Walk/Zofnass Family Preserve. Rain or shine, please wear appropriate footwear for hiking! All ages welcome to attend!

**Paul Zofnass of Pound Ridge and his wife Renee Ring, are members of the WLT Board of Directors. They first conceived the idea of creating a trail preserve here and worked for over 10 years to put the project together. Paul (WLT Advisory Board) and Renee (WLT Director) donated land, persuaded their neighbors to donate land, and created the impressive trail system. This preserve is owned and operated by WLT.*

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

WLT needs your help to care for the natural spaces in your backyards.

Tuesdays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 20 September 3 & 17 October 1 & 15 10:00 AM - 1:00PM	Thursdays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 22 September 12 & 26 October 10 & 24 	Grow & Share! Farm Volunteer Days @ Sugar Hill Farm 403 Harris Road Bedford Hills	Would you and your group like to grow food for the Community Center of Northern Westchester and give back to the land you love? If so, we encourage you to contact Kristen O'Hara at Kristen@westchesterlandtrust.org or call 914-234-6992 x15 to learn more!
Saturday August 17 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM		Volunteer Stewardship Day @ WLT's Otter Creek Preserve Taylors Lane Mamaroneck	Learn about the importance of wetland habitats by helping our stewardship team care for a one-of-a-kind salt marsh! End the day with a better understanding of what we can do to protect nature for future generations.
Saturday September 21 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM		Volunteer Stewardship Day @ WLT's William K. Love Preserve Parking off Oakridge Drive South Salem	Join WLT staffers and the volunteer stewardship crew for a native planting extravaganza! Learn about the detrimental effects of invasive plants and how to properly replace them with native trees.
Saturday October 19 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM		Volunteer Stewardship Day @ WLT's Tom Burke Preserve 401 McLain Street Bedford	Help our stewardship team revamp this lovely preserve. We'll clear trails, put up new signage and bring a historic stone wall back to life!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 14 @ Off-site location September 19 & October 15 @ Sugar Hill Farm, 403 Harris Road, Bedford Hills 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Bionutrient Food Association (BFA) Meetings Join BFA for monthly potluck/meetings that include a garden or food themed discussion, hands-on workshop or presentation, as well as time outside in the garden. Participants include farmers, backyard gardeners, nutritionists, chefs, all of varying levels of experience. All are welcome!		

FAMILY FARM FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING THE PERMANENT PROTECTION OF THE OLDEST WORKING FARM IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY, STUART'S FRUIT FARM.

Enjoy

Food Trucks

Hay rides

Live Music

Apple Crisp

Family-Friendly Games

Raffles and more.



JOIN US AND CELEBRATE!

**Saturday,
September 14, 2019
4-7 pm
Stuart's Fruit Farm
62 Granite Springs Rd.
Somers, NY**

RAIN OR SHINE

**Admission is FREE!
Food & drinks will be available for purchase.**



PRESENTED BY WESTCHESTER LAND TRUST AND SOMERS LAND TRUST



Somers Land Trust

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FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT WLT OUTREACH COORDINATOR KRISTEN AT 914.234.6992 EXT. 15 OR KRISTEN@WESTCHESTERLANDTRUST.ORG.