

Open Space Chronicles

Spring 2022

35 YEARS AND GOING STRONG Preserving the Valley's Special Places

This year marks the 35th anniversary of FoHVOS. It's amazing to reflect on how much we have accomplished as an organization over the course of three and a half decades.

FoHVOS has made a remarkable transformation to change with the times yet has steadfastly upheld our core principles. What began back in 1987 as grassroots land preservation work has evolved into a more comprehensive, far-reaching effort to not only preserve land, but also nurture the land, its wildlife habitat, and our connections to the community. We have a continuous eye on the future to ensure that our lands are healthy and accessible for everyone to enjoy.

The Earliest Days

Our story began in 1987, when an ad was placed in the local newspaper seeking people interested in open space conservation in Hopewell Valley. Weeks later, a group of concerned citizens gathered to discuss the growing impact of suburban sprawl on their community.

We felt a bit nostalgic listening to John Jackson, the longest serving Board Trustee, share his memories from those early days of FoHVOS. According to Jackson, the impetus for their action was a major roadway, to

be known as the Pennington Bypass, slated to intersect a beautiful 116-acre plot of land on the edge of Pennington Borough that contained a mature beech forest and a 17-acre lake.

In Jackson's recounting of events, it was Jack Gleeson who first brought the group, now known as Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space (FoHVOS), together. Jackson likened the mood to the recent PennEast Pipeline fight where the greater community joined together to protect our bucolic neighborhood against a large organization with its own agenda.

A Hard-fought Battle

Our battle, reminiscent of David versus Goliath, required sustained effort to overcome the numerous challenges along the way. Jackson mentioned the many public protests and that his neighbor Jim Vincent blocked opposition efforts by donating a small lot of strategically located land for permanent preservation.

Ted Stiles arrived in Hopewell Valley in 1987 and became the president of FoHVOS in 1989, upon the passing of Jack Gleeson. Stiles was a man of boundless energy with a passion for preservation of open space. In 1993, years of coordinated effort resulted... (Cont. on Page 3)

SAVE THE DATE September 18Celebrate 35 Years



Watch for details this summer!

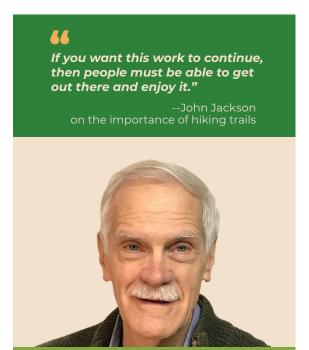
Hopewell Valley Preservation Over Time





NEWS INSIDE

- 35 Years and Going Strong
- From the Executive Director
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Sowing the Seeds of FoHVOS

Jamie Sapoch, Executive Director of The Watershed throughout the 1990s, recalls a time when she, Ted Stiles, and Jim Amon of D&R Canal Commission sat around a table imagining potential organizations. Jamie documented that vision by writing grants for what are now known as Northeast Organic Farming Association and D&R Greenway Land Trust.

Emile DeVito, who has worked in stewardship with New Jersey Conservation Foundation since 1989, credited Stiles as an inspiring leader and added that Ted "had a major influence on hundreds of people now working in conservation."

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Branching Out in the Community

Our cover article shared John Jackson's exciting account of FoHVOS early days. As he tells it, much of our initial success was attributable to Ted Stiles. But Ted's reach extended far beyond preservation. Ted planted the seeds for FoHVOS to grow like trees whose roots in land stewardship and branches in the community define who we are today.

The FoHVOS Board prioritized maintaining, restoring, and stewarding land to advance our mission. Mike Van Clef Ph.D., ecology student and protege of Ted Stiles, joined the organization as our first and only Stewardship Director. In Mike's 16 years with us, he has helped FoHVOS earn a statewide reputation as a leader in land stewardship.

Our land stewardship includes important wildlife habitat restoration programs for threatened and rare species such as kestrel, pollinators, copperheads and other reptiles. Since public preserves represent only 30% of local land, we also began working with homeowners and other private landowners to address the remaining 70% and maximize our ecological impact. We've improved air, water, and soil quality through planting native wildflowers and trees, eradicating invasive species and helping hundreds of members do the same.

FoHVOS continues in our spirit of community support by incubating conservation startups in various stages. According to Joann Held, Co-Chair of the Pennington Farmers Market, FoHVOS was the original fiscal sponsor of the farmers market and administered their finances for years, but "like any good parent, encouraged us to leave the nest and fly on our own."

More recently, we've reabsorbed our well-seasoned NJ Invasive Species Strike Team (page 4) and also serve as fiscal sponsor for the thriving new Outdoor Equity Alliance (page 5). Joann Held, who now sits on the NJ Environmental Justice Advisory Council, maintains her relationship with FoHVOS by serving as our OEA EJAC Liaison.

In our 35 years, we have provided community programs, engaged in advocacy, and built miles of hiking trails. Through these endeavors, we have inspired an expanded, diverse community to access, represent and steward our lands.

She Had Us at Hello

FoHVOS Welcomes Tomia MacQueen to our Board of Trustees

The first time we met Tomia MacQueen at her Wildflower Farm located on Pennington Harbourton Rd, she immediately committed to being an expert teacher in our Agrihood internship. Her charismatic enthusiasm for our lands and natural world is contagious. Tomia was the spark behind the Outdoor Equity Alliance Kwanzaa celebration and she hopes to help FoHVOS maximize our impact on locally preserved agricultural lands.

Tomia is also on the Board of the Northeast Organic Farming Association and is part of the Governance Working Group of the Ujamaa Cooperative Farming Alliance. She graduated from Hunter College, holds teacher certification in New York, and is a Master Gardener.





Tomia leads Agrihood interns

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2022 3

35 YEARS - CONTINUED FROM COVER

(Cont.) in a tremendous success - the preservation of Curlis Lake Woods. FoHVOS brokered a deal whereby Mercer County purchased all 116-acres for approximately \$3 million. As Jackson recounts, "the little guy prevailed" in that effort and so began the journey of FoHVOS, true "Friends" of Hopewell Valley Open Space.

The preserve, located off of Pennington's Main Street, now contains hiking trails and serves as a connector to the Mercer County Equestrian Center and Rosedale Park/Mercer Meadows.

Combat on Two Fronts

While Curlis Lake Woods was our first decisive win, the struggle to preserve Baldpate Mountain from development began at the same time. Throughout a decade-long fight, Ted Stiles and FoHVOS encountered a nearly insurmountable series of obstacles to save this beautiful land.

The collaborative effort between Mercer County, Hopewell Township and FoHVOS to preserve Baldpate Mountain began in 1987 and culminated with the official preservation in 1998. According to majority owner, Mercer County, "In 1986 the property was sold to Trap Rock Industries, who planned to expand the quarry that already existed on Route 29. When these plans failed, the remaining land was destined to be sold for luxury housing development. Public concern and the efforts of the late conservationist Ted Stiles led to the property's acquisition by Mercer County in 1998, creating today's Ted Stiles Preserve at Baldpate Mountain."

Building on A Solid Foundation

The single-minded focus on land preservation in the earliest days of FoHVOS provided a solid foundation from which to build. Stiles and FoHVOS went on to preserve thousands of acres across the Valley.

Currently, Hopewell Valley enjoys more public open space preservation than any other Mercer County municipality. (See Cover Photo.) The Ted Stiles Preserve at Baldpate Mountain is home to both our It was FoHVOS participation in programs to extend opportunities to neighboring communities..." --Chad Goerner on why he donates more to FoHVOS

FoHVOS headquarters and the highest point in the county.

In its first decade, FoHVOS was established as a Land Trust with staunch determination to preserve our beautiful green spaces. Each passing year, we inch toward their vision of preserving and connecting a greenway from Baldpate Mountain to the Sourlands and beyond.

2021 CORPORATE DONORS

Bloomberg L.P. Bristol Myers Squibb Calloway Henderson Sotheby's Capital Health System Church & Dwight Co., Inc Fraytak Veisz Hopkins Duthie, P.C. Northfield Bank

Janssen Pharmaceuticals Johnson & Johnson Lear & Pannepacker LLP Naked Running Man Fan Club NJCF - Franklin Parker Grant

PSE&G Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Stevens & Lee USDA NRCS Washington Crossing **Audubon Society**

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Helen Corveleyn John and Carol Jackson Marjorie Kaplan Judith Karp Ryan Kennedy Carol Kleis & Rex Parker Jaquan & Mikaela Levons Frank & Kim Newport Jeffrey Osborn Daniel Pace Daniel Rubenstein Mimi & Chuck Turi

Donor Spotlight

Thank you, Chad Goerner

Chad Goerner, a Hopewell resident who works professionally as an institutional consultant at a large financial firm, was a founding member of the Hopewell Valley Arts Council and served on the Board of New Jersey Conservation Foundation. He is a regular donor to FoHVOS, participates in our Community Conservation program, and has purchased memorial tributes.

In addition to his annual contribution, this year Mr. Goerner made a significant donation of stock to FoHVOS. "As a former Mayor, I know the importance of land preservation. Hopewell's parks and open spaces are community treasures and FoHVOS is integral to maintaining and enhancing many of our open spaces."

"Supporting them for this reason is important, but what compelled me to increase my annual contribution was their participation in programs to extend agricultural opportunities to neighboring communities through their partnership with the Outdoor Equity Alliance."

Strike Team Awarded \$372,905 Federal Grant

Improving Forest Health through Community-based Collaboration between Public and Private Landowners

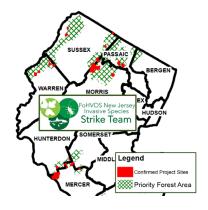
FoHVOS Strike Team -- the only US Forest Service State & Private Forestry Landscape Scale Restoration Grant recipient in New Jersey

In its project entitled, "Improving Forest Health through Community based Collaboration between Public and Private Landowners." FoHVOS Strike Team received the only LSR grant funding in the state. The Strike Team application had been ranked in the top 10% of projects submitted but had not been previously funded until Congress approved its Federal budget. The grant of \$372,905 covers a 3-year term and includes with equity component emphasis on participation from underrepresented communities.

Michael Van Clef Ph.D, FoHVOS Stewardship Director and author of the USFS grant application, shared: "The title says it all. The FoHVOS Strike Team and its partners will be improving forest health. The most immediate results will be improved biodiversity and benefits to wildlife, but this project also provides significant climate change mitigation which will literally improve the health of our entire planet. We get there through community-based collaboration among service organizations working as partners with public and private landowners. We achieve this through simple restoration techniques like tree planting and invasive species control."

Cementing its reputation in Community Conservation and collaboration, FoHVOS included provisions to share the revenue with other local nonprofits who will help implement the objectives of the project. Hopewell-based Sourland Conservancy and NJ Audubon are slated to receive \$103,000 and \$116,000 respectively for their work on this ambitious restoration.

US Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration



I SR Grant Details

Measurable Outcomes & Expected Results

Our strategic approach optimizes public benefits from trees and forests. This work leverages our previous LSR grant and helps educate over 100 private landowners who will increase our advocacy impact.

Improve Water Quality

Enhance 1.5 Miles of Riparian Forest

Improve Wildlife Habitat

Enhance 9,420 Acres of Wildlife Habitat

Forest Contribution to Global Carbon Cycles

Plant over 15,000 Native Trees

Private Land Restoration

Provide Technical Assistance to 105 Landowners

Restore 4,112 Acres of Private Lands

Improve Forest & Soil Quality

Treat 9,000 Acres for Invasive Species CHANJ (Connecting Habitats Across New Jersey) focused restorations

Community Partners for Improving Forest Health

Grant Partners

New Jersey Audubon Sourland Conservancy

Matching Partners

Mercer County Parks Morris County Parks

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Outdoor Equity Alliance

Erica Johanson &

10-Year Invasive Plant Mgmt PlanPrivate forest landowners

Strengthening Partnerships

NJDEP, Parks and Forestry Division NJDEP, Fish & Wildlife Division Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

STRIKE TEAM DONORS

2021

Barbara Andrew & Gerald Seid
Mary Ellen Balady & Dawn Durain
Christopher Barr & Patricia Shanley
Peter Blanchard Charitable Trust
Alexandra Christy
Patricia Coleman
Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley
Julia Dare
Barbara Davis
Susan Dorward

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Eileen Ferrer
Fox Foundation
Carolyn Gordon
Laurel Gould
Gracie & Harrigan
Consulting Foresters
Amy S. Greene
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Justin Grgurich
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Hilltop Conservancy
Hyde & Watson Foundation

James Powers
Charlize & Bru Katzenbach
David Kientzler
F. M. Kirby Foundation
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Foundation
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Susan Michniewski & Doug Meckel
Sally Mirick
NJ Highlands Coalition
Christine Newman
Lisa Parent
Hilary Persky
Richard Pirrello
Princeton Hydro
PSE&G
Keith Sagers
Daryl Savage
Peter Schweinsberg
Flaine Silverstein

Nan Simon
Sourland Conservancy
South Mountain Conservancy
Alice St. Claire-Long
Tanya Sulikowski
Roger Thorpe &
Clair Ransom
Robert Tomaselli &
Michael Dawson
US Forest Service
Michael Van Clef
Jonathan Wagar
Lauren Smolow Walrath
Weeds, Inc.

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OUTDOOR EOUITY ALLIANCE

How Fast We've Grown!

The Outdoor Equity Alliance, a fiscally sponsored project of FoHVOS, began in 2019 as a coalition including Mercer County Park Commission, land trusts, government and service organizations working with a common objective of "Nature For All."

In mid-2021, we developed a 3-yr strategic plan and received a \$50,000 grant from Princeton Area Community Foundation Bunbury Fund to implement our plan. Thus far in 2022, the OEA has established a governing structure, approved bylaws, and elected the Executive Committee.

We look forward to confirming our Advisory committee comprised of all the organizations that originally helped found the OEA.

The OEA serves as an incubator to help establish best practices and provide a recommended template for other organizations seeking to integrate diversity, equity and inclusion.

In 2021, we co-sponsored New Jersey's first official Juneteenth celebration with Legislative District 15, Mercer County Parks and TAACF. Mercer County Parks received the Excellence in Visual and Cultural Arts Programming from New Jersey

Recreation & Park Association for its OEA partnered Juneteenth celebration featuring black cowboys and women equestrians.

We worked with the Trenton South Ward Neighborhood Assoc. to support their new urban garden. Last December, the OEA partnered with Ujamaa Seed Cooperative to host a community wide Kwanzaa celebration.

In 2022, FoHVOS received critical acclaim and media coverage for its OEA partnered internship series which features other OEA members as guest instructional experts. The OEA also worked with many organizations to offer Mercer County Summer Camp scholarships for families that may struggle to afford camp.

For Juneteenth this year, the OEA and Princeton Hydro are highlighting achievements of black farmers. Local black farmers will sell their produce, eggs and seedlings



Outdoor Equity Alliance Elects Board Leadership



Leslie Summiel Jr.

Alex Rivera



Damon Missouri

Amie Rukenstein

Fledgling OEA organization establishes a governance structure as a foundation for growth.

Officers

Board Chair - Leslie Summiel, Jr. Vice Chair - Alex Rivera Treasurer - Damon Missouri Secretary - Amie Rukenstein

Board Members:

Eleanor Horne Aaron Watson Lisa Wolff - FoHVOS Fiscal Sponsor Liaison

Watch for the list of founding Advisory Committee Members in our next newsletter.

to the public. Information booths will publicize local community gardens and locations where fresh produce is available throughout Trenton. We'll be sharing FoHVOS/OEA Agrihood program and other opportunities for youth of color to explore the world of agriculture. Juneteenth attendees will have opportunities to discuss health disparities and how organic eating and enjoying outdoor green spaces can improve physical and emotional well-being.

From building urban gardens, to sponsoring community events and internships, the OEA is ramping up as fast as we can. Stay tuned to hear about many more exciting plans.

OEA FINANCIAL SUPPORT

2021

*PACF Bunbury Fund
*Bristol Myers Squibb
*Janssen Pharmaceuticals
*Vanessa Sandom &
Carl Seiden
*Lisa Wolff &
Paul Kinney
Julie & David Blake

Ted Borer & Nancy Lehman Simon Borgen Patrick Brennan Marissa Bunting Michael Coakley David & Elizabeth Cohen Matthew Delillo Marylou Ferrera Robert Flory
Leslie Hann
Barry Higgins
Jeff Hoagland &
Michelle Hamilton
Eleanor V. Horne
HVCHS YES Club

Ryan Kennedy

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Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space welcomes members and gratefully acknowledges donors who made contributions between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021. With your support, we continue to preserve land, protect natural resources, and inspire the next generation of conservationists.

Trail Leader (\$1000 and up)

Christopher Barr & Patricia Shanley Mark & Samantha Bean Franta Broulik Bernadette Connaughton less Difante Lemay Evann Gleeson Chad Goerner Amy S. Greene Kimberly Haren John & Carol Jackson Ellen Kick & Seung Kwak Lisa Wolff & Paul Kinney Carol Kleis & Rex Parker Drs. John & Moira Lawrence, III Jaguan & Mikaela Levons Kristin & Michael McLaughlin Maria Nicolo & David Earling Anne Nixon-Ellery & Michael Ellery Linda Osborne Ed Rosen Cassandra Roth Vanessa Sandom &

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Carol Saunders

Robert Wilson

Julie Wulf

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Aldrin Phillips Janet & Michael Pressel Michael Ruger &

Theresa Vogler Amie Rukenstein Molly and David Schneider Mimi & Charles Turi Shana Weber & Kevin Scully

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Adam Maloof

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Memorials

May 2020 - December 2021

Ethan Anderson Lisa Wolff - FoHVOS

Malcolm James Borders-Ashe Richard & Jean Pinto

Michael G. Cappucci 2009 Hurricanes

Dr. Doris Carpenter Lisa Wolff - FoHVOS

Leonard Gittens Lisa Wolff - FoHVOS Alexander Hakkinen Greg Vafis

Kent Hastings

Nancy Cutler Michael Hastings

Betty Wold Johnson Katherine Dresdner

Margaret Johnston

Julie & David Blake David Chait Carol Kleis & Rex Parker Kevin & Leslie Kuchinski

Kristin & Michael McLaughlin Courtney Peters-Manning & Tomas Manning Uma & Ashok

Purandare
Michael Ruger &
Theresa Vogler
Vanessa Sandom &
Carl Seiden
Bill Stolow
Lisa Wolff &

Warren Lacewell Chad Goerner

Christopher Limato Julia Berman

Paul Kinney

Alice Valiquette Revelia Logan Horvath

John Seckinger Allison Haight

Peggy Snyder Iulia Dare

William E. Tunnicliffe, Jr. Elizabeth McLaughlin

Tributes

May 2020 - December 2021

Eli Croner The Turi Family

Sarah Dickerson-Zuidervliet Riley Zuidervliet Mary Clare Garber Mimi & Charles Turi

David Garber Mimi & Charles Turi

Joshua Held Joann & Isaac Held Thomas Smith

Carolyn McGrath

Rachel Thompson

Elizabeth Thompson

Romy Toussaint Sandie Nicholson

Capital Health Memorials

Joseph, Mary, Doris, & Joan Aldino Eileen Horton

Stephanie Bader Lisa Whitter

Hildegarda Bader Lisa Whitter

Feroze Chenoy Nakra Family

The Enourato Family Rosemary Russell

The Fabe Family Rosemary Russell

Barbara Fordham Lisa Whitter

Herbert L Gettys Jacqueline Gettys

Randy Hagar Janice Krupa

Lola Kim Elli Kim

Michelle Kownacky

Friends and Colleagues of RMC Dialysis Unit **Debbie Mark Lake** Suzanne Borgos

Mr. & Mrs. Lishary Alireza Maghazehe

Abbas Maghazehe Alireza Maghazehe Roshen Nakra Nakra Family

Yvonne Tran Nee Dr. & Mrs. William Costanzo

The Pallotti Family Rosemary Russell

Margaret Pallotti Rosemary Russell

Dave & Lillian Peaslee Donald & John Horton Eileen Horton

Leon Pensyl Lois Kotkoskie

Frances & John Praznoski Nancy Diane Praznoski

The Rotondo Family Rosemary Russell

The Sheetz Family Rosemary Russell

Russell Snyder Cathyann Worek

Julia Snyder Cathyann Worek

Richard Wright Cindy Shemansky

Eco Warriors

Akhnasha Arvind Nathan Borgos Lilian Brennan Nadia Chasalow Ada Everett Ethan King Carolyn McGrath Phoebe Schoene Tabitha Webster



UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information or to register for an event, please visit FoHVOS.org

Build a Home Meadow (with Mike Van Clef)

Hopewell Public Library's Wednesday Night Out Series.
Time/Location: Hopewell Theatre

May

May

Pennington Day

Come out to spend time with friends, family, and the community! Time/Location: Downtown Pennington

June

New Jersey Tree Farm Day (with Mike Van Clef)

Invasive Species Identification & Control (with field tours). Location: Clover Rod and Gun Club, Kingwood Township, NJ

June

National Trails Day Hike

Force of Nature Yoga Hike with Romy at our newly built trail. Location: Woolsey Park Trail to Jacob's Creek Trail

June 9-11 FoHVOS Scavenger Hunt with HV Come Outside and Play

Use iNaturalist to identify local species for a chance to win cool prizes! Location: Anywhere in Hopewell Valley

June 11 Harvesting and Farm Tour HV Come Outside and Play

Farmer Tomia MacQueen will lead veggie harvesting and a farm tour at Wildflower Farm Location: Wildflower Farm in Pennington

June 23 & 25

Duke Farms Master Ecologist Program (with Mike Van Clef)

Invasive Species and Deer Management Master Class Location: Zoom

















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OUR Mission:

Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space is an accredited non-profit land trust that is dedicated to preserving the Valley's character by partnering with the community to preserve land, protect natural resources, and inspire a new generation of conservation.



Board Trustees and Staff

Officers	Trustees	Staff	
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