

# SHAWANGUNK WATCH

Spring/Summer 2006 Preserving Open Space in the Shawangunks Volume II #1

Friends of the Shawangunks & The Shawangunk Conservancy

## AWOSTING pRESERVED FINALLY!

by Keith LaBudde

THE EFFORT TO PROTECT THE AWOSTING RESERVE, the largest parcel of land on the Ridge still privately owned, finally bore fruit on March 14 after more than 18 years. The Trust for Public Land (TPL), with support from the Open Space Institute (OSI), purchased the 2,518-acre parcel for \$17 million in a court-ordered sale, and immediately resold it to New York State for inclusion in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. Thus ended an effort begun in the fall of 2002 by a group of investors, including, Chaffin/Light Associates, John Bradley (owner of the land), and others to construct 349 houses and an 18-hole golf course on the property.

The proposal to develop this property produced a coordinated effort by numerous organizations and individuals to see the property become part of Minnewaska. It also resulted in an awakening of the Gardiner community to the need to preserve the Shawangunk Ridge, and in new zoning for the Ridge to further its preservation. Local residents banded together under the name "Save The Ridge" (STR), and were very effective in making the developers aware of just how unacceptable their proposal was. It was a truly amazing and effective grass roots effort. Friends joined with STR to oppose the development, and with our legal counsel Phil Gitlen, to support the Town in defending two lawsuits brought by Awosting Reserve.

But the effort to protect the Awosting Reserve started well before 2002. It was in 1988 that Friends of the Shawangunks presented to the Palisades Interstate Park Commission and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation a report prepared by Karl Beard for Friends, urging the state to acquire the then 2,224-acre reserve owned by John Bradley.

In 1989 Bob Anderberg, as chairman of The Shawangunk Conservancy (newly formed to protect land on the ridge), approached John Bradley to explore the possibilities for safeguarding this critical parcel. Bob and Keith LaBudde were taken on a jeep tour of the reserve by Bradley in 1990, and were amazed to be able to drive to within 400 feet of Mud Pond. This confirmed just how important it was that this property remain undeveloped. The Conservancy did not have the resources to purchase the property or an easement, but we thought we could interest others in doing so if a deal could be worked out. Although we were initially optimistic, our efforts came to naught.



Bob, as legal counsel for Open Space Institute, pursued discussions with Bradley, and thought he had reached an agreement in 1990, and again in 1995 and 2000. In 2000, all that remained was for the papers to be signed, but Bradley walked away from deal.

The Nature Conservancy then became involved, attempting to negotiate an easement in 1992. This effort also failed.

While protection of the Awosting Reserve remained the highest priority for all of us, it was readily apparent that John Bradley did not want to part with his property. He was prepared to talk about doing so but not to act. While we were not totally comfortable with having this property in his hands, as long as he made no effort to develop it the land was essentially protected—until the fall of 2002.

Included in the TPL/OSI purchase of Awosting Reserve was not only most of the property identified in our 1988 report, but also the Tillson Lake holding that was to be part of the golf course and other lands Awosting Reserve had acquired. Not included is a 143-acre parcel extending into the Palmaghatt Ravine that we feel needs to become part of Minnewaska.

It is tempting to rest on our laurels, but now we must address the question of how the property will be managed. What access will the public have? Will a parking lot be constructed, and if so how big will it be? When will the trail from Verkeerder Kill Falls to Mud Pond be reopened? What will be done with the Tillson Lake property? Carol Ash, Executive Direction of Palisades Interstate Park Commission, managers of Minnewaska, has stated that because of the size of this addition (along with another not yet consummated), she intends to reopen the master plan for all of Minnewaska in the fall.

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# Cat's Cradle

Christopher Spatz



It's lunchtime in the middle of June. A guy sits down at the bar where I work. He's wearing a tank-top, and among his abundant tattoos, I notice, is one of a cat, a panther, prowling across his upper arm and shoulder. He orders

a beer and a burger, then proceeds to tell me about a mountain lion he saw dying on the side of Route 209 that morning, up in Hurley. "I wanted to pick it up," he says, "before I thought twice about tangling with an injured cat that big." No kidding.

I ask him where and call the paper I sometimes write for to send someone out with a camera. Nothing. I can't get there myself until the next morning. No skid marks, no blood or patches of fur, no body. I call my friend Rob at the DEC. Nothing. I look at the previous day's incident log at the State Police barracks in Hurley. Nothing. This is the problem with mountain lions. They're phantoms.

Like Elvis and UFOs, they appear for an instant and leave only rumors. In the five years since I started my fool's-quest collection of mountain lion reports in Ulster County—sightings dating from the '50s right up to two weeks ago—the tally is approaching fifty. Since I mentioned in casual conversations that I was working on this piece, I've heard five more. Scratch a post office chat or a library exchange around these parts and a mountain lion drops out. Thing is, officially, they're phantoms.

North America's biggest and most adaptive cat (they once roamed from southern Alaska to Tierra del Fuego) was hunted out of the Northeast by the 1890s, like desperadoes, by bounty hunters and lynch mobs followed with parades. But sightings persisted throughout the last century—in the Gunks, Marc B. Fried recounts several for nearly every decade in his 1998 mountain memoir, *Shawangunk*—and reports throughout the region are on the rise, even down in Jersey. Instead of the welcome news these reports might suggest to the folks whose business it is to protect endangered species; government game officials dismiss them with curious denial. If these were bald eagles, they'd be launching parades.

Dr. Ward Stone, New York State's wildlife pathologist and co-host of WAMC's weekly environmental program, "In Our Backyard," fields a mountain lion report about once month. Dr. Stone raps the bureaucratic gavel, "If people are seeing mountain lions, they're either escaped black market pets smuggled in from South America," or worse, "they're being mistaken with deer, fisher, and golden retrievers." Harper's Magazine ran a long essay two years ago on this chimera. Up and down the east coast, about the only source of agreement regarding mountain lions in the article: wildlife doctors are diagnosing delusions in humans.

The physical evidence supports them: few tracks, little scat, no bona fide photographs, half-eaten prey, or road-kill. The single piece of hard evidence in the Gunks is a set of prints found by the Mohonk Preserve's Daniel Smiley Research Center researchers late in 2004. "Cat tracks the size of my palm," said botanist Paul Huth. Casts were taken and sent to Albany. Albany's conclusion was inconclusive, betraying the conviction of eye-witness accounts.

"I was in my consulting room with a patient," a High Falls psychologist told me, "when one loped across the lawn, long-tail and all." A psychologist oughta know from delusions, and misidentifications don't engender the wonder heard in the voices of those blessed by a close encounter. Often striking in these sightings is the kind of mistaken identity Dr. Stone and his colleagues suggest, *until* the moment of

recognition. Experience and expectation tells folks that they *are* seeing a deer or a tawny dog, then comes the bolt of awe: "Oh my God, that's a mighty big cat."

Some believe the Feds are secretly introducing western cougars to control the deer. Others say they're keeping mum for fear of inciting the heirs of those 19th century lynch mobs; certain deer hunters dislike nothing more than an animal that preys on *their* prey. There are any number of theories gilding the question that is the Eastern mountain lion, so what the hoo, here's mine. They were never hunted out. Close, but not completely.

The absence of hard data: hunting pressure breeds cunning. This most adaptive of predators wandered the land unmolested for millennia, before suddenly becoming the hunted. Breathlessly stealthy and largely nocturnal, they've been to hiding school. Since New York has sanctioned the Eastern subspecies as extirpated—exterminated here, but not necessarily in other states—the word's been reinforced that they're probably long gone, so no one's been much encouraged to produce concrete evidence. And although the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have designated the subspecies as endangered, it's a shell-game. Listed as extirpated state-by-state, they're always never here, but potentially elsewhere. Kafka knew the Eastern cougar.

But a century of sightings suggest that the cats have survived the bounty hunters on semi-wild islands like the Gunks, and within the larger islands of the Catskills and the Adirondacks—the nation's first experiments in government preserved wilderness parks—holing up in the deeper reaches, raising even wlier progeny. A half-dozen of my reports, and several spanning the decades in Fried's chapter, mention cubs; appearing this week in the *Sparta Independent*: a vivid incident from Vernon, NJ of cubs playing cat and mouse with a litter of housecats.

The Northeast's once-decimated forests have revived famously between the state parks and preserves, ripe with deer. With abundant quarry and bigger digs, mountain lions, like black bears and coyotes, are simply expanding their range, no doubt caterwauling with those feral South American pets.

But for wildlife officials, securing evidence for *Felis concolor couguar* (from DNA, since it's one of only two North American subspecies listed as endangered) presents an Olympian headache. Never mind distinguishing illegal immigrants from their native cousins with actual field-work. Alpha predators—bears and wolves and big cats—need big hunks of real estate, habitat both the state and the Feds are mandated to protect once evidence of an endangered species is established. They are environmentalists' mother lode. Protect the alpha's habitat, and every species and ecosystem within gets saved. Seen the price of Northeast real estate lately?

The last thing anybody wants to deal with is a pesky endangered cat ruling the top of the food-chain, stalking the dreams of real estate moguls and Hollywood stars and gentlemen sheep-farmers already lynching coyotes, preying on the Home-in-the-Country Empire. I understand the caution in scientific reticence, and maybe blanket denial is keeping the posses at bay, but with the return of black bears and coyotes as an opening act, can it be long before the phantom cat has its night at the opera?

It is unlikely that any eastern state will reintroduce cougars; the required habitat is simply not available. From its website, this is the conclusion of the NYS DEC. Somebody better remind the cats.

Seems it's easier to diagnose public delusions than to treat your own headache.

*Christopher Spatz is Director-at-Large for the Gunks Climbers Coalition. He has never seen a mountain lion.*

# Recent Land Protection Efforts in the Gunks



## A Private Initiative

Open Space Institute (OSI) recently purchased a 16-acre parcel on the northern edge of Minnewaska State Park Preserve, adjacent to the Saunders Kill, with the intention of transferring it to Minnewaska. While this is a fine addition to Minnewaska, its size and location are not as noteworthy as the process by which it was acquired: money for this purchase came from outside sources. OSI has made many significant purchases in the Gunks, and wanted to ascertain if there was public support for protecting additional lands there. The total cost was only \$8,473, since the parcel was landlocked. The Shawangunk Conservancy and some of its board members contributed \$5,973, and four others provided the remaining \$2,500.

## PROJECT WATCH

### **BUDDHIST RETREAT CENTER**

*Maureen Radl*

The United Tibetan Buddhist Fellowship has acquired 91 acres in the Hamlet of Cragmoor which it wishes to develop as the Dharmakaya: Mahamudra Buddhist Hermitage. The primary purpose of the center is to teach the practice of meditation with a focus on three year retreats. It will also accommodate shorter retreats and special one-day teachings. The proposal is for approximately 17 buildings, totaling 78,000 square feet. The largest structure is the meditation hall which could be up to 12,000 square feet.

Representatives from Dharmakaya have met several times with residents of Cragmoor to identify subjects of concern. Some of main issues center on the overall scale of the project, occupancy load, water consumption, sanitary sewerage, traffic volume, parking, fire protection, land conservation, view shed impacts, loss of tax revenue, and proximity to the Cragmoor Historic District.

The Town of Wawarsing has been identified as the lead agency and has determined that a full Environmental Impact Study be prepared. A public scoping session was held in November. A draft scoping document was submitted by the applicant and made available to the public, and written comments were submitted. A very comprehensive statement was submitted by Cara Lee, Director of the Shawangunk Ridge Program. She provided detailed background on the ecological, cultural, and historical significance of the area and drew specific attention to issues which should be addressed. They include impact on flora and fauna, topography/steep slopes, hydrology and groundwater resources, surface water resources, septic systems, traffic, and cultural resources. She further recommended that the Planning Board seek funds from the applicant to allow for expert review of the DEIS, and that it consult with the State Historic Preservation Office regarding impact on historic resources.

A sketch plan review was presented in January, and on May 4, the public was invited to observe a Planning Board workshop with the applicants. Trungram Gyaltrul Rinpoche, the spiritual leader: John Henderson, the director, and Philip Cerniglia, the architect represented the group. Some of the discussion revolved around the Hermitage becoming the global headquarters for the organization. Trungram Rinpoche explained that it would only be the spiritual center for preserving the group's wisdom teachings. Most of the organization's broader activities are concerned with education and health ministries in India and Nepal, the offices for which are in Boston.

Many questions were still left unanswered, and results of water tests at various sites were still unavailable. Three accommodations that would help to make the project more compatible with the small Cragmoor community would be a reduction in the overall scale of the project, a contribution to the Cragmoor Volunteer Fire Company instead of taxes, and conservation easements on the remaining open land. FOS and The Cragmoor Association will continue to monitor the progress of this project and offer recommendations for the mitigation of negative impacts on the hamlet and the ridge.

### **MONTICELLO CASINO STILL A THREAT**

*Richard Geldard*

In the aftermath of 9/11, Governor George Pataki moved quickly to shore up New York State's finances by trying to make deals with several Native American tribes to settle long-standing land claims in exchange for income-producing casinos.

The various proposals threatened the Shawangunk Ridge in significant ways. Both Ulster and Sullivan Counties are targeted sites, with Orange County also impacted with dramatic traffic increases.

Many of the proposals either have been dropped or blocked in the courts, leaving only two still on the table: one in Sullivan County at the Monticello Raceway and one in Ulster County just off the Thruway in Saugerties. The latter proposal still has many obstacles to clear before becoming an immanent threat, but the Monticello project is moving forward. The proposed Raceway complex would have 766,000 square feet of floor space, 4,200 gambling positions, a 1,500-seat bingo hall and parking for 4,800 cars and buses. The casino would draw nearly six million visitors annually, according to documents

produced by Empire Resorts, the casino developers, and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. As proposed, this project would be as big as the MGM Grand, Las Vegas's largest casino, and would create traffic back-ups and pollution from roadways serving the Ridge, including routes 17, 52, 44/55, and 209.

This direct threat to the ecosystem of the Ridge and to quality of life in the region deserves close attention and aggressive resistance. As stated in the latest Shawangunk Ridge Coalition Alert, the Monticello project should at the least be subject to a rigorous environmental review. See [www.ShawangunkRidge.org](http://www.ShawangunkRidge.org) for more details about what action citizens can take.



# The Other Side of Property Rights

by Karen Schneller-McDonald

All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts. His instincts prompt him to compete for his place in the community, but his ethics prompt him also to cooperate (perhaps in order that there may be a place to compete for).

Aldo Leopold



Development 'sprawl' in the Hudson Valley and the desire of many residents to protect natural resources have been the subject of often-heated debate. The tension between individual rights and community rights (i.e. the common good) is an important underlying issue in this debate. On one hand is a growing awareness of the need for grassroots support of natural resource conservation and protection of rural character. On the other hand is a conviction that property owners should be able to do whatever they want with their land including developing it to the maximum extent. Environmental and health regulations, conservation subdivisions, and zoning are frequently the target of those who hold this latter conviction.

The tension between individual or property rights and the protection of the common good is not new. Our "founding fathers" were influenced by the Enlightenment philosopher Montesquieu, who defined a republic as "a self-regulating political society whose mainspring is the identification of one's own good with the common good." This is civic virtue. For Montesquieu, the virtuous citizen was one who understood that personal welfare is dependent on the general welfare, and could be expected to act accordingly.

**This public or 'common' good includes long-term rather than short-term interests. The consequences of today's decisions must be evaluated in terms of their effects in the future—in 10 years, 20 years, 100 years.**

The American pattern of land use has changed dramatically over the past 200 years. A progression of social, economic, and environmental changes have affected the way we view ourselves as individuals within communities. This isn't the Old West, where land seemed limitless and population density was in the single digits per square mile. This is the mid-Hudson Valley today, where we are rapidly losing natural resources, on which we all depend, to development sprawl. Natural resource protection will not occur without effective proactive planning that can welcome new projects while holding developers accountable for maintaining and even enhancing the common good—in this case, the natural resources that are so crucial to our quality of life.

This public or 'common' good includes long-term rather than short-term interests. The consequences of today's decisions must be evaluated in terms of their effects in the future—in 10 years, 20 years, 100 years. Philip Black of Pendleton County, Kentucky, comments in Harker and Natter's *Where We Live* that he became actively involved in community issues because of concerns about water quality in a creek running by a landfill. In his words:

*You know, my grandparents swam in that creek, my parents swam in that creek, my wife and I swam in that creek. If one kid gets sick from swimming in that creek twenty years from now because of something I didn't do, that would be terrible.*

Recent studies show that we are all dependent on a healthy environment for our physical, mental and spiritual well-being. In *Last Child in the Woods* Richard Louv "directly links the absence of nature in the lives of children to some of the most disturbing childhood trends: the rise in obesity, attention deficit disorders and depression." His work compiles extensive research indicating that direct exposure to nature is essential for healthy childhood development and for our physical and emotional health. An understanding of this aspect of the common good should help to inform local land use decisions.

All too often, objection to the protection of a community's natural resources—open space, habitat, clean air and water—is voiced as "I can do whatever I want with my land, and no one has the right to tell me otherwise." This is as unrealistic as asserting that no new developments should be allowed anywhere.

If we are really "free" to do what we want with our land, what about our neighbors? If they also enjoy this "freedom," what happens when one person's water pollution ruins a neighbor's drinking water quality? Or when a town's famous scenic views are ruined by unsightly development? No one lives forever, or 'owns' land forever—but the land itself endures. Recognizing that all land uses are not compatible, and some impacts cannot be mitigated, certain individual actions that affect land use and the environment may need to be modified or even prohibited in order to protect the common good. This is legal, fair, and only common sense if we are to leave our children with an environment that can continue to sustain them. In this scenario, 'property rights' is not a stand alone issue, but is part of a larger discussion that includes balance with the common good.

Today we are beginning to understand the complexity of connections between groundwater, wetlands and streams and water quality/supply, between unfragmented forests and rare birds, watersheds and habitat. The Shawangunk Ridge is an excellent example of the larger implications of municipal natural resource protection policies. Seven towns contain different portions of the watersheds and habitats that comprise the northern Shawangunk Ridge. If one town allows land development without resource protection, (for example, leading to watershed degradation), it could negatively affect resources enjoyed by the residents of adjacent Ridge towns.

Why do we continue to allow development to occur on the terms of developers? Where is public indignation over this fact? Where did we get the idea that land developers have an inherent right to maximum profit at our expense? Why are we timid about insisting that our natural resources need to be protected? Towns have municipal authority to do this. We all have a right to clean water for drinking and for recreation. Too often, residents accept information about "green" or "environmentally friendly" projects, as presented by developers,

## Summer Solstice Run

without sufficient scrutiny to reveal true costs and the nature and consequences of resource loss. Towns would be well-served to conduct their own analyses of these issues to protect the interests of their residents, and reach their own conclusions in light of serving the public good. Wetlands and forests are being lost, and water contamination from stormwater runoff is increasing. Residents are being sold on the inevitability of development, made more palatable by a promise of increased tax revenues, without understanding that in most cases the increased costs of community services for residential development are not covered by increased tax revenue. A proliferation of individual septs, for example, may result in future drinking water contamination. Who will bear the cost of that clean-up?

Federal and state agencies are shifting more of the responsibility for resource protection to local municipalities. For example, federal and state regulations protect only some wetlands, often resulting in significant wetland loss without local attention to the consequences. What is the cumulative effect of this loss on future flooding, or water quality and supply? Effective planning tools and legislative authority are available, but Towns also require the will of Town residents to protect what they value.

Fear of litigation may be a factor in suppressing that will, but the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act does provide protection for towns. In "Municipal Powers Under SEQRA" (New York State Bar Journal), Michael Gerrard states:

"The authority under SEQRA to impose conditions is a sword that is much more readily wielded by agencies than against them. Courts have upheld agency decisions (challenged by developers) to impose conditions on developers..." and "Municipalities that properly document their decisions now have very broad discretion to protect their environment." And, that a 'takings' is generally understood by the courts to occur if "a government action denies a landowner any economically viable use of property (not just the most profitable use)..."

Individuals or developers who oppose land protection measures (e.g. zoning changes, limits on impervious cover, habitat and wetland protection, conservation subdivision, and cumulative impact assessment) invoke the property rights argument but usually don't say much about the common good. Developers assure us of water quality protection, but close scrutiny of many projects reveals just the opposite. We will all foot the bill for the consequences of poor land use decisions. Worse, so will our children.

Protection of property rights to the detriment of the resources we all share is an indication of a land use management system that is out of balance. To restore balance and cultivate the will for positive change in planning and decision making, we are challenged to overcome fear of controversy, and to promote civil discourse so we can evaluate difficult issues in a constructive manner, emphasizing conversation over conflict.



The annual Summer Solstice Run was held on June 21st at Minnewaska State Park. This run put on by the Shawangunk Runners Club is a benefit for Friends of the Shawangunks and Save the Ridge. Annie Mardiney of FOS coordinated the food contributions and a loyal group of orange cutters, waterstop servers, and course sweeps. 185 runners participated in what is billed as a 15K race, but is more like an 8.5 mile course that we know as the Castle Point Loop. It is an unforgiving course and the winner completed it in 49+ minutes. Phew!



Photos by Larry Randall

Steve MacDonald, Maureen Radl, and helper cut oranges and watermelon to feed the finishers.

Which alternative is worse: insisting on the protection of natural resources (common good) in the face of controversy— or dealing with the consequences of natural resource degradation and loss?

In *Spirit of Community*, Amitai Etzioni writes that "We have a moral commitment to leave for future generations a livable environment, even perhaps a better one than the one we inherited, certainly not one that has been further depleted." "We need to leave our kids the options of enjoying the great outdoors, learning about what lives there, catching minnows in clean water."

Rights and responsibilities go together; we can have both well-planned development and natural resource protection. The challenge is in working to balance that ever-present tension between the individual and the community. This includes considering the public good (that long-term view), valuing natural resource stewardship and our children's future, and acting accordingly with confidence.

*Karen Schneller-McDonald is an ecologist and wetlands specialist. She works with municipalities bridging the gap between natural resource information and planning activities.*



SOS triathlete, trainer and exercise physiologist Dorothy (Left) and Annie O'Neill sign in runners.



Runners came from as far away as Manhattan and Custer, South Dakota

# Summer Hiking Update

Malcolm Spector

Here are several opportunities that will interest the intrepid hikers around the Gunks

## Blue Trail

The old Blue Trail, from the site of the former fire tower, about 0.3 miles north of High Point on the Red Trail to Four Mile Camp on the Smiley Road has now been re-opened. This trail was not maintained for more than thirty years during the period of the commercial Ice Caves Mountain operation at Sam's Point. Permission to re-open this trail was given by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC) last fall. A trail crew from the New York New Jersey Trail Conference (NYNJTC) began clearing the trail soon thereafter, and now has completed its work.

The trail is roughly two miles long. The trailhead at the fire tower lookout is three miles from the Visitor Center at Sam's Point. From the trailhead on the Smiley road, it is four miles to Berme Road Park and approximately the same to the parking on Foordemore Road at the base of the Mine Hollow Road. Thus, anyone wishing to walk this trail faces a hike of at least nine miles.

This trail has an intense sense of the remote, through the pitch pines, over the slabs, along a winding escarpment, with views of the Catskills and north toward the ridgeline of the Gunks. It is very exposed to the sun on a hot summer day, but now with the waist-high blueberry cut back, it can safely be done in shorts.

## Scenic Trail Long Path between Verkeerderkill Falls & Mud Pond

Many readers of this newsletter remember the trail connecting Sam's Point and Minnewaska State Park Preserve as the old Yellow Trail, also called the Scenic Trail. More recently it has been blazed light blue (or aqua) and become a segment of the Long Path. In August 1999, John Atwater Bradley, the owner of a small segment of land near Mud Pond, revoked permission for the trail to cross a portion of his property near Mud Pond, and a trail crew took down the cairns and painted over the blazes.

Now that the Awosting Reserve is public land, and PIPC has given permission for the public to explore it, the intrepid hiker is again free to walk between Verkeerder Kill Falls and Mud Pond. The trail has not yet been restored to its previous well-marked and well-clipped condition. In May 2006, the NYNJTC wrote to Carol Ash, Executive Director of PIPC formally requesting permission from PIPC to put this trail back. In a move that stunned the hiking community, Ash refused permission and suggested that no decision would be made on this issue for some time. Friends of the Shawangunks has also written to Ash asking that the trail be reopened.

The absence of proper blazing may cause confusion for the inexperienced hiker and lead to some lost hikers and rescue situations in a remote area. However the sophisticated hiker, especially one who has hiked this area in the past, should be able to follow the old trail. In addition, those who know the folklore of the Gunks should not be surprised if the so-called "cairn-fairie," the guardian angel that protects hikers in the Gunks, along with her secret phalanx of phantom maintainers, works her magic and congers back to life the odd cairn along this very well established historic and scenic trail.

## New Trail in South Gully

Permission has been granted to construct a hiking trail from Route 52 up the South Gully that will emerge at the gravel pit on the carriage road just above the Sam's Point Visitor Center. The lower section of this trail is an old woods road high above the gully floor. The upper section has been flagged through the laurel hillside below the ruins of the berry picker cabins. When completed, this trail will permit the Long Path to eliminate the long road walk on Sam's Point Road from Bear Hill.



## Lundy Swimming Hole

A great place to swim is only a 10-15 minute walk from the Lundy Road, and it is actually legal to swim there!

Take Lundy Road North from Route 209. At 2.2 miles pass Rogue Harbor Road which branches right. Go straight ahead to the top of the hill. Just past the top of the hill where the road veers right, there is a pull out on the left where some power lines cross. This is 2.5 miles from Route 209. Park here. Walk about fifty feet north (in the direction you were driving.) Take the woods road with a gate on the left that descends to the stream. Cross the stream (usually you will need sandals or carry your shoes or boots.) Just ahead is a meadow. (Note how the white pine and spruce trees are reclaiming the open meadow.) Turn left and walk south the length of the meadow on a path beaten down in the high grass. At the south end of the meadow, stay left. Cross a shallow drainage and continue straight ahead following the sound of the stream to two successive swimming holes, with waterfalls. Best approach to the upper pool is to climb down the crack in the rocks just to the right of the upper falls. The pool is about six feet deep near the falls.

*Malcolm Spector is on theboard of Friends of the Shawangunks and on the board of the NY-NJ Trail Conference. He maintains a segment of the red-blazed High Point Trail in Sam's Point Preserve.*

*The struggle to protect open space in the southern Shawangunks continues to intensify, with new challenges from commercial and residential developers joining those already confronting us.*



## Yukiguni Maitake Mushroom Plant

by Maureen Radl

Unfortunately, this spring, the Basha Kill Area Association (BKAA) suffered several legal setbacks. Sullivan County Supreme Court Judge Robert Sackett rejected the Basha Kill Area Association's (BKAA) claims that the Town of Mamakating Planning Board did not take a "hard look" at the environmental impacts of the Yukiguni Maitake mushroom plant. The Appellate Division of the County Supreme Court denied the suit which attempted to get a stay on the Planning Board's ability to vote on the site plan special use permit. The BKAA was advised not to appeal, since it would be reviewed by the same five judges. In addition, the suite brought by Patricia and Kevin Moore, whose property is adjacent to the project, was also denied by Judge Sackett.

Notably, however, the court upheld the BKAA's standing which reinforces its credibility and right to legal recourse now and in the future against proposals whose consequences negatively affect the environmentally sensitive Basha Kill watershed and surrounding area.

On April 27, the Planning Board held a public hearing for Yukiguni's application for site plan approval and a special use permit for its 80-foot-high, 925,000-square-foot building to be located on 209 just north of Wurtsboro. The atmosphere was very tense as union members, many from outside the area who saw the plant as providing opportunities for work, attached opponents and hurled personal insults at them. Chris White, an aide to Congressman Maurice Hinchey, read a letter from him strongly opposing the plant. He sited the Shawangunk Ridge as a regional and national asset, the view from which would be negatively impacted by the plant. When White left the meeting, he was confronted by two union members, causing a NY State Trooper to respond and oversee the meeting. In addition to Hinchey's opposition, another revealing statement was made by engineer, David Clouser, who presented an 11-page report pinpointing many errors, missing information, and permits that still need to be obtained by the applicant.

Despite the legal setbacks, the board of the BKAA is committed to thwarting the construction of this factory and is confident of ultimate victory. It believes that there are still effective legal areas to pursue and will take legal action if Yukiguni is given site plan approval without rectifying errors or providing all required information. Its legal costs are mounting, however, and donations to the BKAA will help to protect the Shawangunks from the negative impact of this inappropriate structure. Please send what you can to BKAA, P.O. Box 1121, Wurtsboro, NY 12790

**Below is a transcript of Maureen Radl's letter to the Mamakating Planning Board that was read on April 27, 2006 Re: Yukiguni Maitaki Manufacturing**

### *Dear Members of the Board:*

I am speaking this evening on behalf of the Friends of the Shawangunks, a grass roots organization that has been working to protect open space on the Ridge and its surrounding valleys for more than thirty years.

We have been following and commenting on the proceedings of the application of Yukiguni Maitaki Manufacturing to build a plant in Mamakating for several years. We have observed what appears to be a sincere effort on the part of this board to delve deeply into the complexities of this project. And yet, we are astounded that some of the most serious issues are unresolved, even at this advanced stage in the process. For example:

- ◆The inappropriateness of a monolithic structure in this rural setting, which among other things, will severely hamper Mamakating's marketability as a tourist destination.
- ◆The impact on the historic setting of the D&H Canal Park
- ◆The strain on natural resources, especially water
- ◆The increase in truck traffic.

On the other hand, over the past few months we have been greatly encouraged by recent developments in neighboring townships facing environmental challenges similar to your own.

In the Town of Newburgh, after an 18 year struggle with the DOT, a final 1,700 acres have been added to the Stewart Buffer Lands for a total of 7,000 acres of protected land.

In the Towns of Gardiner and Shawangunk, the 2,518 acre Awosting Reserve, which was slated for a development of 350 homes, has now been incorporated into the Minnewaska State Park,

In Hudson, plans for a massive cement plant were finally rejected by the state because of the negative impact on the area.

In all of these instances, it was the overwhelming voice of the people who spoke out against these projects. They were tired of having their lives disrupted by global enterprises and by governments that, for whatever reason, didn't seem to have the backbone to stand up to them. The residents, however, were willing to put everything they had into these battles to protect the communities they treasured so much, and eventually the townships and the state listened to them.

It seems that the tide is turning, everywhere, except in Mamakating.

Even outside our region there is a growing awareness of vast global degradation, and many are realizing that our generation is living at a turning point in the history of our planet. The decisions that are made today, by boards just like your own, will determine whether human life on this plant will end in this century or continue into the next.

Imagine for a moment, that you have the wings of eagles, perhaps those very eagles that call the Basha Kill home. Imagine that you can fly high above this extraordinary valley, so high that you go beyond the boundaries of time and can see the past, the present and the future. You can see the Shawangunks standing strong to the east, the Catskills rising gently to the west, and nestled between them a verdant, watery valley that for centuries has been home to animals and people, who with wise planning live in harmony with each other.

But just south and east of the Ridge, marching ceaselessly forward, urban sprawl and industrial development are gobbling up the landscape. In fact, even as you watch, you can see them creep forward over the crest and begin to eat away at the very heart of your township, paving it with massive concrete structures, parking lots, and truck-clogged roads. You can see Kole's, Yukiguni, and all the others that will follow the highway that has been so neatly paved for them.

This is the future that you will be giving to your children, grandchildren, great-great grandchildren if you approve this project. Do you think they will want to live here? Is this why you came to live here?

Mamakating is at the firing line of urban expansion into Sullivan County, and as such, it is being sacrificed for the rest of the country. But you can resist the trend established by Kole's. You are under no obligation to become the industrial center of Sullivan County just because one mega corporation bullied itself into this valley. The other towns are watching carefully and are learning from your experience so they will be prepared to resist if a similar threat should come to them. The rest of Sullivan has a lot to benefit from what is happening here. They can come to Mamakating for their jobs and then after work they can drive home to protected bucolic settings because Mamakating chose to sacrifice itself. Why not

— continued on page 11

# WE SAVED THE RIDGE. But What about the Valley?

Lew Eisenberg

*The Town of Gardiner has undergone an arduous process to create zoning for the ridge. But the ridgetop viewer looks down on a rural valley that lulls him with a false illusion that below is unfragmented forest and field and old farmland. This viewshed could change dramatically, and beneath our very eyes, if the town weren't so hard at work trying to preserve the rural quality that unbeknownst to the ridgetop viewer is being swallowed up by builders. If Gardiner doesn't act quickly the landscape will be forever changed and critical habitats forever lost to development. (Editor)*

While all eyes were turned to Shawangunks during the battle to Save the Ridge, two of America's largest home builders quietly set up shop on the Route 208 corridor. Toll Brothers and U.S. Homes now both have work crews in Gardiner, efficiently building around 50 high-end homes with Ridge views. Other residential development projects (most locally owned) are also before the Planning Board. This is now the norm in Gardiner and will probably be for the foreseeable future.

The rewritten ARR-200 zoning for the Ridge provides strong protection for this unique and fragile land. The rest of Gardiner does not, as of this writing, have similar conservation-sensitive zoning, but it is coming. The town board passed a nine month moratorium on new construction while Matt Bialecki's Zoning Advisory Committee (ZAC) finishes its work on the AR-80 zoning. The goal is to set high conservation standards for future development in the Valley as well as on the Ridge so that all of Gardiner's natural features and resources are protected as much as possible.

## OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Gardiner's Open Space Planning Committee has been working for almost a year to develop a conservation plan for sustaining the rural, ecologically diverse character of Gardiner. Once adopted by the town board (with luck, by the end of the year), the Open Space Plan will work in concert with the new zoning revisions to provide the Planning Board and Town Board with a comprehensive set of standards and guidelines for future development in Gardiner.

This doesn't mean that Gardiner's population will not increase or that we won't have more road traffic than we do now. There's probably no escaping some of the effects of growth. The main idea of planning is to direct growth into designated areas and establish conservation priorities in other areas to mitigate the physical, social and spiritual impacts of growth.

## OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

The Open Space Committee's main focus is to conduct an inventory of open space resources that provide criteria for the conservation priorities of the Open Space Plan. Data about Gardiner is being compiled into a Geographic Information System (GIS) database. The result will be a series of computer-generated overlay maps identifying water, agricultural, forest, scenic, historic and outdoor recreation resources. Besides their usefulness in evaluating development proposals, these maps will help the community evaluate and identify the key areas that town residents do (and do not) want to preserve or protect. The inventory is almost complete as of this writing. We hope to create a draft Plan within the next two months and use it as the starting point for a community-wide discussion about what kinds of conservation priorities the town wants to have.

## LANDOWNER OPTIONS

We all know that there are developers eager to purchase land in our town. Our goal is to provide financially viable options to help interested land owners preserve their land and sustain the special quality of life in Gardiner.

There are a number of programs that can help landowners preserve their land, and provide tax incentives. These include:

- ❖ Reduction on taxes if you keep your land in agriculture or forestry
- ❖ Conservation easements
- ❖ Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)
- ❖ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)
- ❖ For more about options: [www.townofgardiner.org/openspace](http://www.townofgardiner.org/openspace)

## COST OF OPEN SPACE

It's commonly thought that more houses mean more taxpayers, which means lower taxes. But the opposite is more often true. More houses mean increased population, which means larger schools, more roads to maintain, more people using the town transfer station. . . and higher taxes to pay for it all.

Several recent studies have demonstrated that undeveloped open space, including forest and agricultural land, generate more in real property tax revenue than it requires in municipal services. That means that open space represents a net economic benefit to communities. A study in Dutchess County found that residential lands required \$1.12 to \$1.36 in services for every \$1 they paid in taxes; agricultural lands required \$0.21 to \$0.48 for every dollar paid. (Sayer 1994) When you think about it, this makes sense; after all, trees don't go to school and cows don't call 911.

## RURAL CHARACTER

Gardiner is an increasingly desirable destination for visitors and people wishing to live in the country. As a result, the value of our land has risen dramatically, and more shops, restaurants and professional services are available locally than ever before. However, as Gardiner grows, the very things we love about it—the open land, the fresh air, the quiet, the calm—all slowly begin to disappear. Yes, development brings opportunities, but we have to work at balancing growth with the preservation of our community. Natural resources are finite and vulnerable. Century old trees and farm fields can be destroyed in a day. The sooner we act to protect our open spaces and natural resources, the greater the benefit to ourselves and to future residents.

## COME TO THE MEETINGS

Be part of this process. Give voice to your ideas and your concerns at the next Open Space Planning Committee meeting on the third Monday of each month at 7pm at the Gardiner Town Hall (except in rare cases when that space is too small). Check the Gardiner website ([www.townofgardiner.gov](http://www.townofgardiner.gov)) for confirmation of meetings or contact one of the co-chairs, Lew Eisenberg ([leweis@hvc.rr.com](mailto:leweis@hvc.rr.com)) or Michael Migliore ([michael@whitecliffwine.com](mailto:michael@whitecliffwine.com)). 📧

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*Lew Eisenberg is co-chair of Open Space Planning Committee for the Town of Gardiner and a recent graduate of Pace University's Land Use Leadership Alliance program. He lives close enough to the Ridge to have it interfere with his radio reception, and loves hiking up there in all kinds of weather, whatever the season.*

## The Haunt of the Winter Wren: Not Just Trees, but a Forest

by John Thompson

*This nook is the chosen haunt of the winter wren. This is the only place and these the only woods in which I find him in this vicinity. His voice fills these dim aisles, as if aided by some marvelous sounding-board. Indeed, his song is very strong for so small a bird, and unites in a remarkable degree brilliancy and plaintiveness. I think of a tremulous vibrating tongue of silver... As a songster, he has but few superiors. -*

...from *In the Catskills* by John Burroughs

But how to describe the beautiful long song emanating from Winter Wren? Rev. J. H. Langille (1884, cited in *A. C. Bent Life Histories of North American Nuthatches, Wrens, Thrashers, and Their Allies*) describes this wren's song as a "gushing melody, which seems at once expressive of the wildest joy and the tenderest sadness." The winter wren song extends for ten to twenty seconds, so long in fact that when I'm teaching someone to identify this bird by ear, I tell them to just listen for the bird song that keeps going on and on—that's the Winter Wren!

The Winter Wren is the only wren to break out of North America (wrens evolved in the Western Hemisphere) to span the Northern Hemisphere of this planet: Europe, Russia, China, India, and northern Africa. Somehow this little wren sings variations of his lengthy song from the Shawangunks to the Himalayas.

Winter Wrens, unlike other North American wrens, use mature forests with fallen logs, snags and large trees. Winter wrens require the complex structure of mature forests for roosting, nesting and foraging. In the Shawangunks, you can hear the Winter Wren on his territory in swamps, hemlock ravines and talus slope woodlands. Hopping about fallen logs, the little wren examines bark and small plants searching for beetles and caterpillars. The wren nests low to the ground in tree cavities, upturned root masses, or stream banks.

At the Mohonk Preserve, it is our mission to protect ecological communities. A tract of trees doesn't necessarily equal an ecological community. A forest is an ecological community, with the sun's energy flowing through the trees, into the insects, through the birds and mammals, and into the soil, to be taken up by the trees again. In today's world, many tracts of land are compromised by invasives, pollution, and/or fragmentation, but at the Mohonk Preserve, we are seeking to combat these ecological threats with solid science and sound management to steward our forests and not just protect our trees. Winter Wrens require the old forests that we have on the Mohonk Preserve. If these forests did not have the rotting logs, upturned roots, snags, and large trees (features that young forests do not have), then the Winter Wren wouldn't have a place to live out its life here. The melodious song emanating from our old growth forests reminds us of the good job we are doing, and of the responsibilities we must bear.

When you are walking along Undercliff Road this spring and you've passed the nesting Black Vultures, Common Ravens, and Peregrine Falcons on the Trapps cliff, pause for a moment at the end of Sleepy Hollow. Enjoy the darkness of the hemlocks, the soft greenness of the moss over the jumbled boulders, and the tumbling medley of this little bird's long and masterful song. Then consider our responsibilities to protect forests like this so that future generations can enjoy this wonderful bird just as you and John Burroughs have!

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*John Thompson is Natural Resource Specialist at the Daniel Smiley Research Center of the Mohonk Preserve. John performs baseline monitoring of the ecology of the Northern Shawangunks and is designing and implementing a land management plan to protect and adaptively manage the 6,600 acre Mohonk Preserve*

## Peregrinating in Search of Peregrines

Once again a small band of dedicated peregrine watchers followed a nesting pair of falcons in the Trapps. Months were spent observing and hoping for a successful mating and more. And it happened for the second year in a row on the same area of the cliff. This year the couple moved a tad south to what seemed like a more secure ledge under an overhang.

Tom Sarro and John Thompson coordinated the efforts of a devoted observation team. Daily reports eventually led to the conclusion that a young bird was indeed in the eyrie. Joe Bridges climbed to the nesting area to make sure there of its presence, and the banding was quickly arranged. The male chick was banded by peregrine expert Chris Nadereski of the Department of Environment Protection. Joe Bridges, naturalist, climber and board member of the Mohonk Preserve and Pete Nye, NYS DEC Endangered Species Unit lowered the bird in a box from the eyrie to another ledge where Chris did the banding. (See page 11 for more photos)



Photo of the male chick as young climber by Pete Nye

Below is a typical post from biologist Tom Sarro to the Peregrine listserv. This will give you an idea of the work done by observers. We know there is a mating pair at Millbrook but it is very hard to know what they are up to!

*Today was not a day for anyone short on patience. For the first hour all I observed was the rump end of an adult falcon flutter for about 30 seconds on two occasions behind the flat rock on the eyrie ledge. After approximately one hour there was a ledge exchange where the male entered the eyrie and the female flew off. This exchange was done very quickly with apparently no interchange between the two birds. I could not see if he brought in prey and there were no obvious signs of feeding a chick. This could be because the ledge appears to be very deep and I might not be able to see in that far. For the remaining hour and fifteen minutes no activity was observed. There were no attacks on vultures which also seemed to be very inactive.*

*To be honest I am not sure what is really going on here. It seems late for there not to be a chick and if there was I would expect to see more feeding and defensive activity. If there is an egg yet to hatch it seems a little late but not impossible. Does anyone know if an egg is not going to hatch how long the adults will tend it? If so please post.*

*Observing was difficult, hot and heat waves made the view through the scope awkward. I am planning upon going out on Sunday early to take advantage of the cooler temperatures and hopefully better lighting conditions. If anyone would like to join me I plan on getting there between 8 and 8:30.*



# The Skies...The Limit?

## Airspace Redesign Project



by Maureen Radl

On Monday evening, April 10, 2006 the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) Eastern Terminal Service Area presented a public meeting and information session on the redesign project for airspace in the New York/ New Jersey/ Philadelphia /Metropolitan area. The main intent of the redesign is to decrease the number of delays at the metropolitan airports. A DEIS has been prepared and this was one of numerous meetings scheduled for the public to respond.

### Three plans were proposed.

- A. **No Action** – would not result in any reduction in delays
- B. **Modifications to present plan** – most modifications would occur closer to airports
- C. **Ocean Rerouting** – resulted in more delays
- D. **Integrated Plan** - reduced delays but will cost money

Although the Integrated Plan resulted in the greatest reduction in delays, the fact that it would cost a considerable amount of money may make it less appealing to the government agencies which would have to approve it. It would elevate but concentrate Newark approaches over the Shawangunks.

The following are the comments submitted by FOS on May 30, 2006 to Steve Kelley of the FAA-NAR,

*Dear Mr. Kelly:*

As a resident of Cragmoor and Vice President of the Friends of the Shawangunks, I wish to express my appreciation to the FAA for adding Kingston, NY to its itinerary of public meetings on the DEIS for the Metropolitan Airspace Redesign Program. Although this area may be the farthest away of the twenty-two sites where you held informational meetings, it has been seriously impacted by overflight noise from approaches to Newark Airport since the expanded East Coast Plan was initiated in 1989.

In recent years, there has been some reduction in overflight noise in our area as a result of advocacy on the part of Ulsterites Fight Overflight Noise, the Woodstock Overflight Focus Group, and the support of Congressman Maurice Hinchey among others. The Redesign Program, however, gives us reason for renewed concern. From the computer generated models we observed on April 10, it is evident that air traffic on vector 213 will increase and become more concentrated at intersections TALCO over Woodstock, WEETS over Stone Ridge, and Helon over Cragmoor. These are particularly sensitive areas because of the elevation of the communities and the Catskill and Shawangunk parklands which are located beneath this vector.

We are also concerned that the noise measurements done in this area are flawed. The FAA did not take into consideration that the impact of a single event, such as the overflight of one plane in a rural setting without ambient background noise, can have a greater impact than an event recording the same decibels in an urban environment with extensive background noise. It is essential that new formulas be created that factor in intrusiveness and audibility of noise which would be more applicable to rural area.

In addition, noise was only measured at three sites in Ulster County. None were done on the Shawangunk Ridge, a unique open space designated by The Nature Conservancy as one of the worlds "Last Great Places." The Shawangunk Ridge parklands of Minnewaska and Sam's Point are especially vulnerable because of their elevation and proximity to Stewart Airport. The altitude of the metropolitan traffic

Most of the people present at the meeting were concerned about overflight noise negatively impacting their homes and the Catskill and Shawangunk parklands.

The FEIS is expected at the end of the year. It is important that we solicit as many written responses as we can asking the FAA to take into consideration these protected lands and to use a more appropriate formula when measuring the impact of single noise events in rural areas. We also need to stress that they include a measuring site on the Shawangunk Ridge and give serious consideration to moving the air route over areas which have higher background noise, such as major transportation corridors where the impact will be much less than over parkland.

### Letters can be sent to:

Steve Kelley, FAA-NAR,  
c/o Nessa Memberg, 12005 Sunrise Valley Rd, C302, Reston VA 20191  
1-866-347-5463 Faa.deis@ngc.com

Copies should be sent to Maurice Hinchey and other legislators.

constrains the altitude of local Stewart and Westchester airport traffic, forcing planes from these locations to fly low over the ridge. The level of impact is especially problematic because Minnewaska's and Sam's Point's designation as park preserves means that they qualify for a higher level of natural resource protection than many parks in the New York State System.

After careful consideration of the information that was provided to us at the public meeting on the Airspace Design Program, we would like to make the following recommendations:

- Create a noise assessment formula that makes more accurately assesses areas farther from airports than the present Part 150 averaging methodology which was designed to assess noise levels close to airports.
- ◆ Use that formula for measuring noise on the Shawangunk Ridge. Along with providing a valid assessment of present conditions, it will also establish a base line that can be used to compare noise levels before and after the new plan has been implemented.
- ◆ Examine carefully how arrivals and departures from Stewart International and Westchester Airport will interface with the new design and make this information available to the public.
- ◆ Give due consideration to the need for places of peace and quiet in the metropolitan area which is part of the mission of the State parklands on the Shawangunk Ridge.
- ◆ Seriously consider routing the Newark traffic over a major transportation corridor where overflights will have much less impact because of the higher levels of background noise which already exist there.

Our organization and other groups have worked tirelessly to protect open space in this region. Not to protect the air space above this land, however, would negate all of our efforts and that of the State to provide these rare havens of peace. We hope the FAA will acknowledge the need for such places proximate to the metropolitan area and work with us to maintain quiet skies over the Shawangunks and the Catskills.

*Sincerely yours, Maureen Radl, Vice President*

## NEW BOARD MEMBER

FRIENDS OF THE SHAWANGUNKS IS HONORED TO WELCOME PATTY LEE PARMALEE, the champion coordinator of the Save the Ridge effort, to its Board of Directors.

Patty attended Putney School; received a BA from Reed



Patty and her dogs, with Bob Anderberg at the opening ceremonies of Awosting Reserve

College; an MA from the University of Chicago; a Ph.D. in comparative literature from UC Irvine. She did additional study at the Free University of Berlin, the University of Utah, and Union Theological Seminary. She has taught at UC Irvine; Cal State Long Beach; Cal Arts; and is currently teaching at Ramapo College, NJ.

Her background in activism began when she founded the UC Irvine SDS

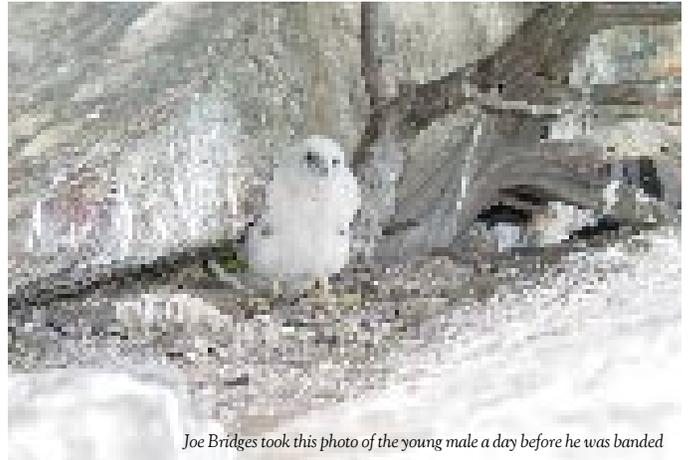
(Students for a Democratic Society) chapter in 1965. She is on the steering committee of the New American Movement; and the program committee of the Brecht Forum. Currently she is on the steering committee of the Union for Radical Political Economics; and she is the coordinator of Save the Ridge.

Patty wrote *Brecht's America*; and numerous articles on German literature, film, and unification. She was labor editor and L.A. editor for *The Guardian* (NY) in the 70s. She is currently on the editorial board of CNS (Capitalism, Nature, Socialism) edited by Joel Kovel.

Additional activism of a different sort is her running and outdoor skills. Patty spent ten years as head coach for the Achilles Track Club for the disabled; is a 25 year competitive runner, marathoner, t'ai chi teacher, and lifelong mountaineer, hiker and backpacker.

continued from Page 9

## The Shawangunks is for the birds...



Joe Bridges took this photo of the young male a day before he was banded

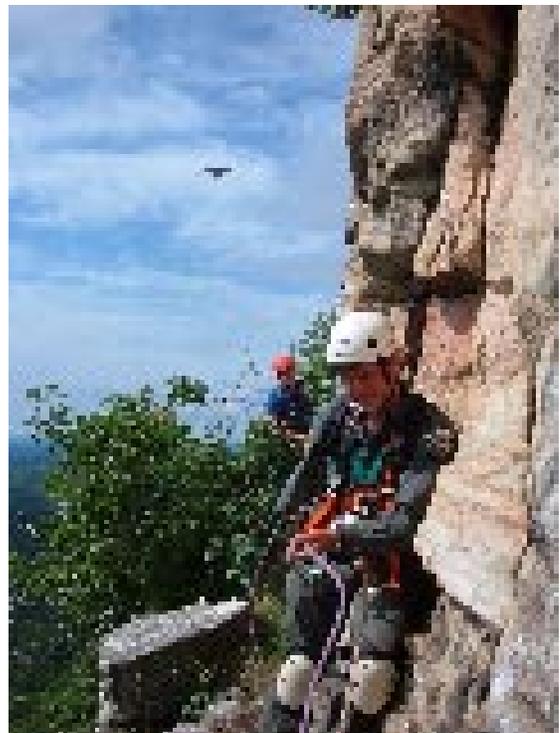


Photo by Pete Nye of Joe Bridges (L) and Chris Nadereski

## Mushroom Plant

Continued from page 7

share the so-called wealth. Kole's is already here; if Sullivan wants the mushroom plant, let another town have it. I doubt that there will be many takers.

It's not too late. Use your eagle eyes to examine this project more closely, and you will see the weaknesses in the plan. Give yourself more time. You all must have an abiding love for Mamakating, or you wouldn't give so much of your time and energy to serve on this board. You can still make a positive choice for the future by protecting the town's great riches: its beauty, its history, its natural resources.

We trust that you will weigh all the facts and make your decision wisely because the impact on human life and the environment will be irrevocable.

Sincerely yours,  
Maureen Radl  
Vice President

Maureen Radl is a longtime member of Friends of the Shawangunks. She is active in many northern and southern Shawangunk issues. She is a resident of Cragmoor and Mexico.



Photos of Chris with the bird by Joe Bridges

# WE HAVE SAVED THE RIDGE

Finally, this part of it!



Photo by Harriet Truesdale

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



FRIENDS of the SHAWANGUNKS  
Preserving Open Space Since 1963

**Friends of the Shawangunks, Inc.**  
is a not-for-profit organization working to preserve open space in the Shawangunks.

**The Shawangunk Conservancy, Inc.**  
is a not-for-profit land conservancy.

Friends of the Shawangunks  
P.O. Box 270  
Accord, NY 12404  
845-687-4759  
e-mail: gunks@hotmail.com

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### Friends Newsletter

Editor: Annie O'Neill  
Design and production:  
Annie O'Neill,

A copy of FOS and The Shawangunk Conservancy's latest financial report may be obtained by writing to the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271, or by writing to The Shawangunk Conservancy.



### YES, I want to continue my support

- This is a new membership
- Hero/Heroine (\$1,000 and up) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Champion \$ 500
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- Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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Matching Grants: If the organization for which you work has a matching grant program, just send us the forms and we will do the rest. Thank you.

IBM matches should be made to *The Shawangunk Conservancy*.

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