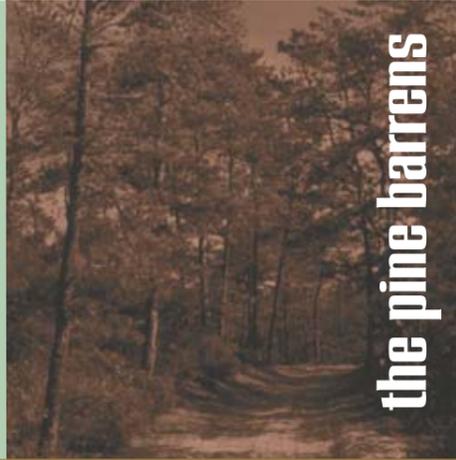




LONG ISLAND
PINE BARRENS
SOCIETY

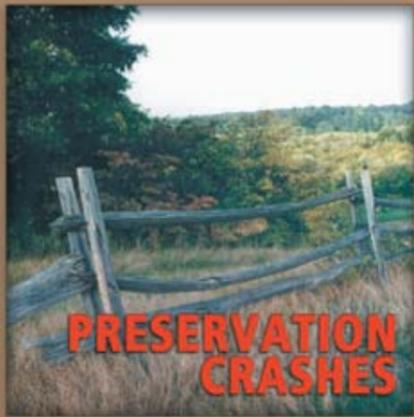


the pine barrens

today

PRESERVATION: NOW OR NEVER

Credit: LIPBS



Considering the Consequences

BAD NEWS: Pine Barrens Society report documents “worst year ever” for land preservation. Read the report at www.pinebarrens.org/openspace.asp

LAND PURCHASES CRASH Preservation Goal Doubtful

Land preservation on Long Island has hit an all-time low, making it nearly impossible to achieve the goal of saving half of the remaining unprotected open space and farmland before final build-out of the Island — projected for 2020.

That’s the conclusion of the Pine Barrens Society’s annual “White Paper,” an assessment of the Island’s progress toward preserving 25,000 acres of open space and 10,000 acres of farmland before they’re lost forever to development. The study says that if the present rate of preservation continues, only 13,000 of the remaining 70,000 acres still “up for grabs,” will be saved, posing grave concern for the region’s environment and economy. The report calls on government to consider the consequences of the land preservation failure.

From a high of 3,000 acres protected in 1991, state, county and town government collectively saved a mere 771 acres in 2009. The precipitous decline in land conservation cannot be attributed to

insufficient funds or to a change in public support. Experts predict that preservation funds that will not sunset until 2030 will generate an additional one billion dollars without renewal or extension. And polls show that 80 percent of Long Islanders support maintaining or even expanding preservation efforts, despite the recession because economic decline has made land purchases more affordable.

The decline came at state, county and town levels. The Society is working to jump start land purchases even as it presses for a study of the adverse impacts on water quality, habitat and other environmental impacts as well as tourism, farming, fishing and the second-home industry on which the Island’s economy depends. “Government cannot abandon a 40-year policy of protecting drinking water and preserving open space without considering the dire consequences to Long Island’s environment and economy,” said Pine Barrens Society Executive Director, Richard Amper.

Ray Corwin: A Remembrance

We mourn the loss of our dear friend, Ray Corwin, who collapsed and died suddenly outside his office on April 5. Ray was Executive Director of the Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission from its inception seventeen years ago until his death.

Before Ray became Director, he served on the board of the Long Island Pine Barrens Society and had already been on the Long Island Greenbelt Trail Conference’s board for eight years or so. The Pine Trail Preserve, the Pine Barrens Trail (now known as the Paumanok Path, a term he coined), the Brookhaven Trail — he was there from the beginning as Long Island’s trail system expanded eastward.

Although Ray was passionate in his love for Long Island’s Pine Barrens and Greenbelt Trails, he was dispassionate when he needed to be. Possessed of great intelligence, integrity, and honesty, he was the perfect, and only logical, choice to direct the Commission. All the stakeholders in the Pine Barrens — builders, environmentalists, user groups and public officials alike — trusted him.

Ray was what Bob Wieboldt, former director of the Long Island Builders Institute, called “a walking encyclopedia.” At many a meeting — be it the Pine Barrens Commission, the Protected Lands Council, the Law Enforcement Council, some other of the many committees and councils, or even a Greenbelt Board meeting — inevitably the group would puzzle over a particular rule or procedure or course of action. Just as inevitably, someone would say, “Let’s ask Ray.” Ray usually had the answer. More often than not, he would begin, “Well, ECL 57 says ...,” and then cite a chapter and section of the Pine Barrens Protection Act, usually from memory. And we would all sit entranced and enlightened.

So also, when some Commission, Council or Board gathering would bog down in discussions of minor details or get off track completely, Ray would often say, “What the real issue is ...,” and, in his perceptive,

(continued on page 3)

Gala 33 Set for October 13th!

The Long Island Pine Barrens Society will hold its 33rd Anniversary Environmental Awards Gala at Oheka Castle in Huntington, October 13. The Gala Committee meets this month to plan the event, including menu, music and the usual mischief that has made the Society’s annual event a “must attend.”

The Long Island Pine Barrens Society was founded in 1977 by John Cryan, Robert McGrath and John Turner. The Society’s work protecting drinking water and preserving open space has won the group numerous honors and national recognition. A popular venue, Oheka Castle is the former estate of Otto Hermann Kahn, lovingly restored by Gary Melius who will serve as Chairman for Gala 33.

The event will feature a “Salute to Lena Horne” by the Denice Given Band, some breathtaking views of the Carmans River, and the usual fun and games. For sponsorship opportunities or tickets, call Victoria Fontana at (631) 369-3300.



Credit: Nancy Epstein

IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LIFE: Dining, dancing, awards and the music of the Denice Given Band featuring a “Salute to Lena Horne” are all on tap for the Society’s 33rd Anniversary Environmental Awards Gala, October 13th, at Oheka Castle.

the thicket

Pine Barrens Pollinators: Native Bees and Their Role in Our Premier Ecosystem

by Laura Bavaro

Laura Bavaro is a conservationist and full-time beekeeper. Her beehives are located on the North Fork and marketed from Southold under her label Blossom Meadow. Laura's local honey and candles are sold throughout Long Island.

In April, the sweet perfume wafting from the bell-shaped, white flowers of a low bush blueberry in the Pine Barrens beckons a young common eastern bumble bee. The bumble bee answers – buzz pollinating the flowers, collecting food reserves of blueberry pollen and nectar for her own nest as a thank you. To the delight of box turtles, birds, and hikers alike, small, dark blueberries bursting with flavor adorn the low bush blueberry in July and August.

Blueberries (*Vaccinium* spp.) and bumble bees (*Bombus* spp.) are native to Long Island, their symbiotic plant-pollinator relationship has evolved through time. Bees can't survive without the flowers of plants and the flowers' existence depends on the bees. For the bees, plant pollen and nectar are their sole sources of protein and carbohydrates, respectively. As bees travel from one blossom to another, pollen clings to their fuzzy bodies. It is then transferred to the other flowers of the same species. This pollinates or fertilizes the plant. While some blueberry cultivars can self-pollinate, cross pollination results in increased fruit and results in larger berries with more seeds. Native pine barrens plants like sheep-laurel, sweet pepper-bush, and American holly all depend on pollinators so that they can produce fruit and seeds.

The importance of native insects cannot be overstated. Native insects provide over \$57 billion/yr in vital ecological services, including wildlife nutrition (\$49.96 billion/yr) and pollination (\$3.07 billion). Yet, bee populations are in general decline throughout North America both in species richness and overall abundances. In fact, of the approximately 775 bee species east of the Mississippi (US and Canada) more than 70 of these species have not been seen in the last twenty years. In order for native insects to continue functioning and in some cases bounce back from decline, they need to be factored into land management decisions.

Open space protection is perhaps the most recognizable way to safeguard the three factors influencing native bee habitat – food sources, nesting sites, and pesticide exposure. However, homeowners and farmers must also play a major role in protecting pollinators. Unfortunately, as a society, we have dismissed the importance of our native insects to the environment and our own well-being and instead have focused much attention on using and proliferating more honeybees (a non-native originally from Europe).

How to Safeguard Native Bee Habitat

Food sources: To increase forage for native bees, plant hedgerows and yards with native plants, shrubs, and trees as these flowers are four times more attractive to native bees than exotic flowers. It is best to choose several colors of flowers (bees are particularly attracted to blue, purple, violet, white, and yellow), ensure blooming plants throughout the growing season, and plant flowers in clumps four feet or more in diameter. Try to also plant heirloom varieties of perennials and herbs. These plants are typical-

ly good sources of nectar and pollen, attributes that may have been lost when the plant was further bred for showy flowers or drought tolerance. For additional food opportunities, it is best to allow farm and garden crops, such as lettuces, to bolt, or to develop flower stalks which in turn produce seeds. Even more importantly, with over 31,000 square miles of lawns maintained as mowed grass in the United States (a combined land area of MA, RI, VT, and NJ), these areas could be converted from food deserts to native bee smorgasbords simply by allowing clover, dandelion, and violet to grow – perhaps some of the lawn also could be converted to a perennial bed interspersed with shrubs.

Nesting sites: The majority of bees in New York State are ground-nesting. While mulch and landscape fabric are effective in suppressing weeds and conserving water, it discourages ground-nesting bees. Other species such as the bumble bee make nests in pre-existing cavities, such as an abandoned mouse nest or bird nest. Native orchard mason bees make their nests in smaller pre-existing cavities including old beetle burrows in dead trees. Leaving some of your yard unmulched and without weed fabric as well as allowing a few dead trees to remain provides essential habitat to native bee populations.

Protection from pesticides: Widespread pesticide use has contributed to the decline of bee populations. If pesticides must be used, spray on dry evenings after dark when bees are not active.

The need for effective conservation of our native pollinator populations including bumble bees (there are 17 different species on Long Island!), orchard mason bees, and sweat bees is only now being appreciated. In many cases, including in the pollination of blueberries, native pollinators are more efficient than honeybees on a bee-for-bee basis. Honeybees AND healthy populations of native pollinators are critical to Long Island's future.



HUCKLEBERRY HOUNDS: Bumblebees also pollinate the native huckleberry which is found in the Pine Barrens.



PINE BARRENS POLLINATORS: Many native plants, including low bush and high bush blueberries are pollinated primarily by several species of bees but may also be pollinated by wasps, ants, flower flies, and humming birds.

Credit: LIPBS

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS NOTES

Memorial Day Massacre

Credit: We Love NY Coalition



BLIND SIDED: Despite an ambitious statewide campaign, environmentalists saw New York's Environmental Protection Fund cut by 40 percent.

New York State's Environmental Protection Fund, created in 1993 to help pay for land purchases in the Pine Barrens, was slashed by 40% in the state budget at the hands of Governor David Paterson and spineless state legislators. The EPF funds land preservation, water protection and scores of other environmental programs. The cuts amount to \$79 million in total. Only \$17 million was budgeted for open space, statewide.

On the Monday before Memorial Day, Governor Paterson threatened to keep some parks closed, unless the legislature butchered the EPF, even as forecasters were calling for beautiful weather. "Fearful of being blamed by constituents for 'closing the parks on a holiday weekend,' the legislators folded like beach chairs and cut the EPF budget, not with a scalpel, but a machete," PBS Executive Director Richard Amper exclaimed.

Up the River Without a Paddle

Environmentalists are pressing state, county and town government to get going on an oft-promised Comprehensive Watershed Preservation and Management Plan for the Carmans River. Environmental and civic leaders have sent a ten-point plan for protection of the Pine Barrens river that would acquire land, limit development and limit pollution in the 10-mile long river which runs from Middle Island to Great South Bay. The preservation plan was made a Society priority last year, but little progress has been made on the part of local government.

The groups called for an expanded committee of stakeholders, scientifically defensible watershed boundaries and a moratorium on new development in the watershed until a preservation plan can be put in place before the end of 2011.

Credit: Julie Clark



IT CAN'T WAIT: The Carmans River in Brookhaven. Environmental leaders want government to pick up the pace for a preservation plan.

Community Preservation Fund

The Pine Barrens Society has called for a moratorium on spending under the Community Preservation Fund in East Hampton and Southampton after irregularities resulted in investigations by a grand jury and the State Comptroller's Office. The moratorium would apply to all transactions except land purchases and would last until a final report from the Comptroller, rules and regulations are formulated by a special committee of government and non-government organizations, and a plan for repayment of misdirected funds is obtained. "The public needs to be reassured that their money is being spent as directed," said PBS President Alan Singer, "These two towns have been playing fast and loose with the public trust."



The President's Point of View

Ray Corwin: A Remembrance

(continued from page 1)

by Thomas Casey

Mr. Casey is a member of the Board of Directors of the Long Island Pine Barrens Society. PBS President Alan Singer will return with a new column in the next issue.

analytical way, steer the group back to what really mattered, sometimes to an important point that hadn't even occurred to anyone else. He was meticulous with details without losing sight of the big picture.

Part of Ray's power to communicate derived from his unique voice, a preternaturally calm, slightly gravelly tenor with a pleasing cadence and inflection. His innate decency and respect for others kept condescension and haughtiness from ever creeping into his tone. He could expound at length on an arcane regulation and still keep a roomful of people mesmerized with the clarity and precision of his thoughts, befitting the Princeton-trained mathematician he was.

Ray possessed a wonderfully wry sense of humor. He loved word play and was so adept at sly offhand comments that listeners often did a double-take before a good line had a chance to sink in. Sometimes we would hear a gentle, solitary, almost-suppressed laugh from him, often over some irony or silliness or posturing at otherwise serious meetings. He could laugh at the foibles of human nature, but he never laughed at an individual.

At its annual dinner in 1994, the Long Island Pine Barrens Society honored Ray for his contributions to the environment. Typically, with the smoke still clearing after the battle to save the Pine Barrens, the new Executive Director of the Commission thought a few steps ahead. Wishing to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, Ray wisely and modestly declined to attend, leaving those of us present to pose for pictures around a life-size, cardboard cutout photo of the honoree. We all enjoyed a good laugh, and word of the spectacle delighted Ray.

Most people who knew Ray characterized him as humble. More accurately, he possessed what the author John McPhee called "a sense of where you are." He was quietly self-assured yet self-effacing, confident in himself without feeling the need to prove anything. Moreover, he had faith that we all had something positive to contribute; he cared more about engaging others and giving them a sense of ownership in the Pine Barrens than in worrying about any credit for himself. In recent years, as the purchase

of open space has wound down in Suffolk County, Ray's focus increasingly turned to something always dear to him: stewardship. He constantly worried about how we could preserve the gains of the past two decades, and who would do the work. The Pine Barrens Commission, State Parks, County Parks and the New York State Department of Environmental

Credit: Thomas Casey



PHOTO HUNTER: When in the field, Ray never missed an opportunity to photograph the flora and fauna he loved so much.

**So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men.**

— H. W. Longfellow

Conservation have been underfunded and understaffed all the while. The threatened, and now real, park closures added to the pressure on him. He hoped that the Commission's Protected Lands Council could foster more cooperation between the various agencies and user groups, and he saw great promise in involving more volunteers. He lived Thoreau's adage, "In wildness is the preservation of all things."

Mostly, though, Ray was happiest when he was outdoors, cross-country skiing, kayaking, or hiking in the Pine Barrens. In the woods he invariably had his trusty Nikon hanging from his neck, partly for his own pleasure and partly because he was always on the lookout for a good shot to put up on the Commission's website, which was largely his creation. (See for yourself at www.pb.state.ny.us) In October 2009, Ray accompanied the Pine Barrens Research Forum field trip, a walk of over five miles past several Peconic Ponds from Ridge into Brookhaven Laboratory. Part way, looking around at the group of friends and colleagues, he smiled and said, "This is just great. We have to get out like this more often."

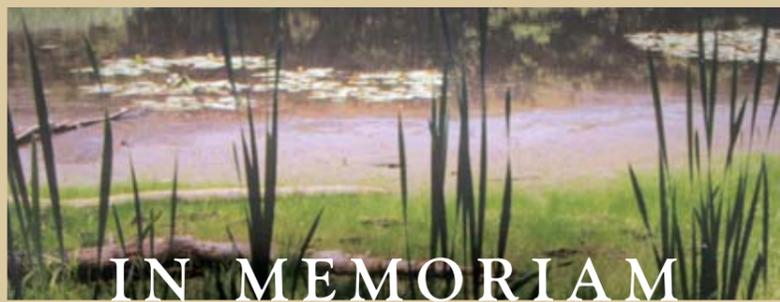
In his last appearance on the Pine Barrens Society's television program, Ray closed his remarks by musing about the ongoing nature of preserving and maintaining our open spaces, adding, "None of us will be here forever. We need to have someone to take our place." Ten days later, he was gone.

At Ray's funeral on April 9, friends and environmental colleagues Marty Shea, Jeff Altorfer and John Turner each offered eloquent, emotional eulogies. John told a story about Ray's almost childlike delight in all things natural. He mentioned one outing when Ray saw a red-tailed hawk circling above the pines and enjoyed the moment as if it were the first time he'd seen this relatively common species.

Barely an hour or two later, as the thirty-odd cars of Ray's funeral cortege passed Rocky Point Preserve on the way to Riverhead Cemetery, a large red-tail perched low in a roadside pine, just watching.

Our hearts go out to Ray's beloved Mindy and to his father, Horace, and brother, Bill. Many remembrances are planned, small consolation though they may be for the loss of one of the brightest, kindest and most admirable people we will ever know.

A walk through the Pine Barrens will never feel the same again. Yet our sadness and sense of loss will always be tempered by the beauty and diversity of life around us, the knowledge that we owe so much of its preservation to Ray Corwin, and the joy of having known him in his all-too-brief time with us.



Last winter, in the spirit of the holidays, some of our members made generous donations to the Society in honor of a loved one. The Society greatly appreciates their support.

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Trap & Skeet

After four years, the New York State Pine Barrens Commission has concluded that the operation of Suffolk County's Trap & Skeet Range in Southaven County Park constitutes development prohibited by the Pine Barrens Protection Act. The Commission reached its decision June 16. A lawsuit by the Pine Barrens Society and the South Yaphank Civic Association was unsuccessful when the New York State Supreme Court ruled that citizens could challenge Commission decisions but could not compel the Commission to act. The resolution to declare the Trap & Skeet operation illegal was made by Brookhaven Supervisor Mark Lesko. Riverhead Supervisor Sean Walter said he supported the action because he felt the Commission had to take a position on a matter of importance to the public. The resolution was also supported by Southampton Supervisor Anna Throne-Holst.



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A copy of the last annual report filed with the New York State Department of Law may be obtained by writing to NYS Attorney General's Charities Bureau, Attn: FOIL Officer, 120 Broadway, New York, NY, 10271 or may be obtained directly from the Long Island Pine Barrens Society, 547 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901

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Credit: LIPBS

TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN:
Having ingeniously helped put an end to the migration of many Canada Geese by trophy lawns and the greening of office parks, humankind now employs the same genius to keep them from rewarding us with their gratitude. How's all of this working out for us?



The Pine Barrens Society's television program airs on Cablevision Channel 20 in the following areas. If your region is not listed here, please call our office at 631-369-3300 to find out how you can help us get it aired on your local Cablevision network. The program can also be viewed on the Society's web site, www.pinebarrens.org by selecting TV Show on the home page. Please note that airtimes will change effective October 1, 2010. Go to Our Work then TV Show on our web site for updated times.

Town of East Hampton
Wednesdays 6:00 pm
Thursdays 9:00 pm
Fridays 3:30 pm

Town of Riverhead, Town of Southold
and Town of Southampton
Sundays 10:00 am
Wednesdays 7:00 pm

Town of Brookhaven, Town of Smithtown
and portions of Town of Islip
Tuesdays 5:30 pm
Saturdays 10:30 am
Saturdays 4:00 am

Town of Babylon, Town of Huntington,
portions of Town of Islip, and
all of Nassau County
Tuesdays 8:00 pm (Channel 115)
Thursdays 6:00 pm (Channel 115)
Thursdays 7:00 pm