



# RELC NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2007

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*To find out more about our organization and conservation easements, please visit our website at : [www.relandconservancy.org](http://www.relandconservancy.org)*

## OUR GENEROUS COMMUNITY

We thank our donors for their support of RELC. We appreciate your confidence and generosity:

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## Margaret Warren's Wonderful Bequest

Margaret McCarrell Warren died in March 2005 and left part of her estate to RELC. Mrs. Warren was a 53-year resident of Sundown, in the Town of Denning, who was well known for her fierce feelings for preserving the natural landscape. A service was held in Sundown at the United Methodist Church after which Mrs. Warren's family planted an apple tree in the churchyard. Though the estate is still in probate, we wish to express our sympathy and great appreciation of her bequest, which includes funds of more than \$275,000, 70 acres of forested land and a house adjacent to the Sundown State Park. We will have more

on Mrs. Warren's extraordinary generosity in the future.



*Jody Hoyt, Barbara Collins, Margaret Warren's niece, Walter Levy, and Gene Moncrief at the United Methodist Church, Sundown, NY*



*The Covered Bridge on the Esopus Creek below Winchell's Falls at the Ashokan Field Campus (Photo by Walter Levy)*

## Good News for Landowners

The Conservancy has some good news for landowners who have an easement with us! New York State (NYS) has adopted a Conservation Easement Tax Credit Program. Beginning with tax year 2006, NYS provides easement donors with a tax credit of up to 25 percent of the property taxes paid on an eased property (minus any improvements such as a house or barn) up to \$5000. You can read more about this program at the Land Trust Alliances website:

[http://www.lta.org/regionallta/ny/faq\\_ny\\_ce\\_program.pdf](http://www.lta.org/regionallta/ny/faq_ny_ce_program.pdf). RELC has registered all our easements with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and secured an ID number, a prerequisite for landowners to qualify for this program. Please contact Walter Levy at 845.626.3140 or e-mail at [wlevy129@gmail.com](mailto:wlevy129@gmail.com) to get your ID number or wait for a letter we will be sending shortly that includes the ID numbers.

# Margaret McCarrell Warren

## a Family Remembrance by Barbara Elizabeth Collins

My dear aunt, friend, heroine, and life-long conservationist, Margaret McCarrell Warren, a 53-year resident of Sundown, died March 10th, at her home at age 87. In 1994, she made provision to bequeath to the Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy her historic mountaintop farmstead home and its 70 acres of land, along with a conservation easement and providing for a public trail to the adjacent Forest Preserve. Knowing that her land in her beloved part of the world would be preserved forever brought her great comfort.

Margaret's life was a remarkable one and her example is a great legacy to me, my two brothers and our only cousin, as well as the many other lives she touched over the years. At an early age I learned from her that committed individuals can make a difference in the world around us; therefore, in 1988 when my husband, Ed, and I founded the Leelanau Conservancy in northwest lower Michigan, she rightfully took pride in her own influence in this "leap of faith," as she termed it.



*Margaret Warren's House in Sundown, NY*

She studied zoology at Ohio University, and during World War II worked in the Signal Corps, the only woman installing electronics in tanks at Willow Run in Detroit. She then worked as a legal secretary in a law firm in Detroit. In 1946, she traveled west alone in the company of her collie, Lassie, in a Crosley station wagon and



*Margaret McCellar Warren*

eventually settled in Taos, NM, where she met her husband Cliff. In 1949, they moved to Levittown, Long Island, and in 1953 moved to the 70 acre farmstead on Yeagerville Road.

A passionate conservationist, Margaret was active in forestry and conservation issues in the Catskill region. She was a founding member of the Region 3 Forest Practice Board and served as Chair, the only female to do so. She was actively involved in State Forest Practice Board meetings, often the only female in attendance, and lobbied successfully for sustainable forestry practices. She was a member of the Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy, the Watershed Forestry Task Force and the Catskill Forest Association. She served on the Town of Denning board for several years, receiving a posthumous commendation for her work.

Margaret earned her Master's degree in Sociology at SUNY New Paltz, working with prisoners and at risk

youth for many years, and was a treatment team leader for the New York State Department of Hygiene.

She was a devoted animal lover all her life; and, with her husband, Cliff, operated their kennel on the mountain, mainly raising AKC Bassett hounds. In later years, Margaret was active in the greyhound rescue organization and adopted "Alvin", her companion for many years. She also was a supporter of the Frost Valley YMCA and has sent two of her great-grandnieces, who want to grow up to be "just like Aunt Margie" there to summer camp for several summers, creating in them deep appreciation for the natural world--and two more future conservationists.

Margaret was preceded in death by her first husband, Jerome C. Tulloch, who died in 1943 serving with the Seabees in the South Pacific; and, by her second husband, Clifford L. Warren, also a veteran, who died at their home in Sundown in 1986.



Jan Leas and Art Markle at the Family Farm Festival August 2005



Alex Miller and Art Markle at the Family Farm Festival, August 2005

## Family Farm Festival

At the Family Farm Festival in August 2005, RELC Spread the good word. The Festival celebrates regional farmers, whose foods were displayed for sale and immediate eating. RELC is pleased to support this effort to improve the rural character of our region.

## Earth Day Lecture with Bob Larsen

Bob Larsen presented an illustrated talk about the "Trapps Mountain Hamlet: A Vanished Community" on Saturday, 23 April, at the RELC HQ in Alligerville. The Trapps Hamlet, according to Larsen, is the story of a different type of community, a hardscrabble, subsistence farming society that was unique to the Shawangunk area. It differed from the communities in the valleys below in their way of life and their economy which was one based on farming, blueberry picking & stone cutting.



Panorama of Winchell's Falls and the lower pond at the Ashokan Field Campus (Photo by Jonathan Blair)

## RELC Honored by the Ulster Garden Club

The Ulster Garden Club (Zone III) awarded a Certificate of merit to RELC at the annual meeting of the Garden Clubs of American in Kingston in September 2005. The award was accepted by Walter Levy who expressed RELC's appreciation of the UGC's support and recognition. We're very flattered that we've been noticed and commended.



## Rene Hertz's Bequest

*Rene Hertz long a resident of Accord and New York City died in 2005. Mrs. Hertz is remembered as lover of the forested open space, which she best enjoyed at her home along the Sanderskill. Mrs. Hertz's left a bequest of \$5000 to RELC, and at her family's request, it was suggested that those friends and family wishing to honor Mrs. Hertz might donate to RELC. To date, family and friends have contributed \$1500. The Hertz family has long been strong supporters and easement donors of RELC. We thank the family including Franny Hertz and Ira Stern, Michelle Hertz and Lawrence Friedman, Jeanie Hertz, and Eric Hertz and Troy Harris. RELC offers its deepest sympathy and heartfelt appreciation.*



RELC

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## RELC Board of Trustees News

After two terms of exemplary dedicated service Art Markle, Jan Leas, and Jody Hoyt have retired from the Board. Their contributions helped RELC fulfill its conservation obligations with style and cheerfulness. Alex Miller, who joined the Board two years ago, resigned, the result of job obligations: he is a councilman in the Town of Rochester.

RELC is working on updating our mission statement, goals, and easement criteria. This will better help RELC position itself in our region to address the challenges we face as our community continues to face development pressures and loss of open space. The results of this update will be in our fall, 2007 newsletter.

RELC will be scheduling monitoring visits this spring and summer. This provides an important opportunity for us to visit and talk with landowners. In addition, RELC verifies that the terms of easement agreement is being followed, an important component of a successful conservation easement stewardship program.

### RELC NEEDS YOUR HELP

RELC is seeking volunteers to serve on committees and the board of directors. In view of increased interest in land conservation, RELC needs help in getting our message out to the community, processing easement donations, and monitoring properties. Please call or email Walter Levy if you are interested or if you have questions (845-626-3140 and wlevy129@gmail.com).

RELC has two new board members! Paul Lenz has joined our board in October, 2006. Paul has many years of experience in the fields of natural resources, watershed management and planning, and hydrology. One of Paul's most rewarding jobs was assisting County and local governments in incorporating watershed planning and conservation development designs into their comprehensive plans and ordinances. Paul is an avid hunter and fisherman and lives in the Town of Rochester with his wife Carol. Jenn Cairo joined the Board in January 2007 and comes to RELC with many years of volunteer land use planning and conservation in the Shawangunks and Town of Marletown under her belt. She is a land manager by trade, focused on conservation areas recreation, and holds masters degrees in natural resource management and policy, and public administration. A native of High Falls, she lives with her family in Stone Ridge.

### SPECIAL THANKS

*Special thanks to Kristina A. Stark, Stark Group ([www.starkgroup.com](http://www.starkgroup.com)) for composing this newsletter. Kristina is also responsible for getting RELC on-line at [relandconservancy.org](http://relandconservancy.org). Thank you to Marie Duggan ([www.mlduggan.com](http://www.mlduggan.com)), for keeping the website informative. All very much appreciated.*