

Vistas

Saving Special Places Volume 13, Number 1

2007 Annual Report

Progress toward the Goals in Our Strategic Plan



Executive Director's Message

Thanks to members, volunteers, directors and staff the Conservancy has had another great year.

In February 2007 we approved our new Strategic Plan which will guide us for the next four years. We set four broad goals for ourselves: strategically conserve more land; steward conserved lands; increase awareness and public commitment to land conservation; and strengthen our organization.

During the course of 2007 we made significant progress toward these goals. We protected 210 acres, bringing our total of protected land to over 1,700 acres by year's end, and developed a land acquisition plan, identifying priority areas in our three-county area of operations. We made steady progress in the area of stewardship, installing kiosks, establishing trails and developing management plans. Through meetings, press coverage and personal contacts



—Dan Driscoll
Ferns at the Philliipkill Preserve

we have spread word of our work and its importance to our local communities, increasing awareness of and public commitment to land conservation. And as we moved into 2008 we gained momentum on our development program. We are confident we are well positioned to implement our land

acquisition and stewardship plans in coming years.

This work would not have been possible without the dedication of our board members, other volunteers and financial supporters. Thanks to all who contributed their various talents and resources to help us achieve so much in 2007.

Jill Knapp, Executive Director



View across from the Normanskill Preserve —Dan Driscoll

Goal I, Strategically Conserve More Land

“As committed conservationists, our desire is to preserve this land in its present state so that future generations can enjoy it and be enriched by its natural amenities.”

David and Sandra Geisinger, donors of a conservation agreement on their 67 acres in Schenectady County.

We share the Geisingers' passion for saving the lands that contribute to our region's rich variety and beauty. We completed our land conservation agreement with them in December. It is an excellent example of how partnerships between the Conservancy and land owners can protect working landscapes, while allowing the landowners the flexibility to manage their land for both economic and recreational uses. For example, the agreement with the Geisingers not only protects the natural beauty of an open space but also allows them to install a wind turbine for residential power and supports their participation in New York's 480a Forest Tax Law, which is designed to promote the sustainable management of woodlands for timber production.

(Continued on page 5)

Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy

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Margaret Sherman
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Vice President

Erick McCandless
Secretary

Jeff Leon
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Legal Counsel

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Stephen Young

Staff

Jill Knapp
Executive Director

Helen Smith
Program Assistant

The Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy is partially funded by the New York Conservation Partnership Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program with support from the State of New York.

Vistas is the Annual Report of the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy and is published once each year by the Conservancy, PO Box 567 Slingerlands NY 12159.

Phone 518 436-6346, or visit www.mohawkhudson.org.

Vistas is also available at www.mohawkhudson.org/pubs.htm.

Vistas is edited by Rodger Fink (rfink@nycap.rr.com).



Peggy Sherman

President's Message

In 2007, the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy conserved more than 200 acres of land and opened another 180 acres of preserves for public enjoyment. On behalf of the board of directors of the Conservancy, I want to thank all our members, donors, volunteers and landowners for making these accomplishments possible.

With growing support, the Conservancy continues its work of "saving special places," protecting the remarkable landscapes and natural areas in Albany, Schenectady and Montgomery Counties. We provide tools that enable landowners to conserve their properties and meet their family's needs. We provide opportunities for enthusiastic and hardworking volunteers to work on improving the environment in their own backyards. We promote land conservation and encourage land use planning as an essential component of a vibrant local economy. And we invite everyone to get outside and experience the nearby special places that the Conservancy has preserved.

Behind the Conservancy's successes are many dedicated people who are committed to our mission. In 2007, our tremendous volunteers cared for our preserves by developing management plans, building trails and installing kiosks and signs. In addition, volunteers helped with mailing our newsletter, contacting donors, consulting with landowners, leading outings and monitoring municipal planning activities across our region.

Our executive director, Jill Knapp and our program assistant, Helen Smith, provide the energy, expertise and management that drive our success. And my colleagues on the board of directors provide unwavering leadership and guidance. We are looking forward to even more progress in 2008!

Peggy Sherman, President

Treasurer's Report

In 2007 the Conservancy again made good financial progress. Land and easement donors contributed substantial amounts to our Stewardship Endowment. Though this fund cannot be used to support our annual operating costs, its growth means that we are strengthening our ability to care for and protect our lands and conservation agreements in the future.

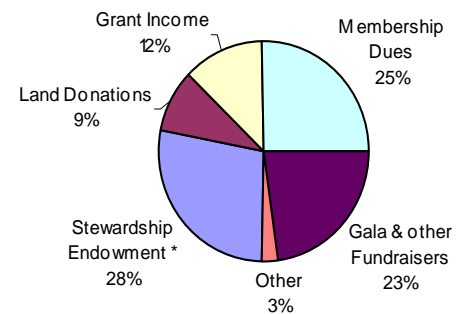
We were again successful in generating grant income. The principle grant came from the Land Trust Alliance and allowed us to invest in a development consultant who is helping us establish and strengthen our relationships with supporters.

Our revenue from membership and fundraising activities was about equal to last year, providing nearly half our total revenue and, along with grant income, funding most of our operating expenses. Those expenses were in line with our annual budget and continue to primarily fund our program expenses. Our fundraising expenses were higher than in prior years as we spent some of our LTA development grant during the year.

Thanks to all our members for investing in our success.

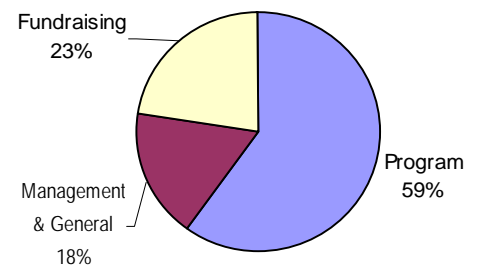
Jeff Leon, Treasurer

2007 Revenue: \$191,559



* See Treasurer's Report

2007 Expenses: \$116,819



Each area includes a prorated portion of staff salaries. Fundraising also includes consultant fees.

Financial Donors in 2007

Visionary \$5,000 or more:

David & Sandra Geisinger
Walter & Alice Gibson
Nigro Companies
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Benefactor \$1,000 - \$4,999:

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Wayne L. Miller
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Supporting: \$100 - \$249

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Mary Elizabeth Jones
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Robert F. Koenig
Robert Krackeler
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Ann Kulak
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Arden Leach
George Leveille
Joseph S. Levinger
Edna Litten
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Wendell Lorang
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Dr. & Mrs. Clifford Tepper
David Tieman
John Traylor
Patty & Kent Troup
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Janet Walker
Charles Weissman, MD
Dolores M. Wilson

Nancy G. Winn
Caleb Wistar
Steve Young & Laura Lehtonen
Kristina E. Younger
Bart & Lisa Zabin

Contributing: \$50 - \$99

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Annette Argyros
Katherine Armstrong & Chester
Harvey
Mark Baird & Darlene Rae Wells
Kenneth R. Baker
Jean Balint
Carolynn S. Barry
Karen C. Beck
Mark & Michelle Belill
Michele Atallah & George Benson



Trail at Bennett Hill —Jill Knapp

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Sandra Camp
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Elsa G. deBeer
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Michael DiPaolo & Amy Schneider
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Jack & Ginny Gajewski
Tom & Beverly Gallup
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Holly Hawkes
Jacquelyn Hawkins
Walter Hayes
Eric & Susan Hilliard
John & Jean Hoagland
Harold & Alice Howes
Barbara & Joseph Huth
Arlene Jackson

| | | | |
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| Steve Jones | Susan Dubois | Martin Barr | Robert & Nancy Lynk |
| Peter Kelly | Irene Econome | Nancy A. Clark | |
| Lois E. Klatt | Dr. Mary Evans | Constance Coon | <u>Betty Lou Bailey:</u> |
| Ginny Kopp | John Fallon & Barbara Coughlin | Dominick DeCecco | Sally Daly |
| Kevin B. Kuhne | Jim Fritz | Miles Garfinkel | |
| Anne Kumpinger & Dan Liebert | Judy & Roy Fruiterman | Roberta J. Glatz | <u>Harry Frisch:</u> |
| Bob Lange | Emily & Jay Gallagher | Marc & Christine Heller | Larry Daly |
| Leo & Carol Reynolds | Marjorie Geiger | Barry & Diane Isenberg | |
| Mr. & Mrs. Georg Luck | Albert J. Howard | David & Patricia Jukins | <u>Donors of Goods & Services</u> |
| Kathy Magee | Eric & Mary Lou Jackson | Margaret & Steve King | Albany Aqua Ducks |
| David & Sandra Martin | Evelyn W. Keller | Kenneth Knapp | Alex & Susan Filipp |
| Marie Masters | Joan Kinsley | Naomi Lewis & Charles Apkarian | Anthony's Chocolate Dipped Fruit |
| Tina Mazzucco | Roy Lambertson | Elizabeth LoGiudice | Artforms Gallery & Framery |
| Marylou McCall | T. R. Laz | Maureen & John McAlary | Blairhouse Interiors Group |
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| Elizabeth Miller | Daniel & Jean Mackay | Bob & Connie O'Neill | A. V. Costa |
| Tom Milner | Christine Marshall | Nancy & Douglas Purcell | Colonial Cleaners |
| Toiga Morawski | Neil & Wanda Martin | Mark & Cheryl Reeder | Dan & Maureen Driscoll |
| David A. Munro & Eileen Hoffman | Ruth Maitrese | Larry & Diana Ritter | David Barnett |
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| Sallie Pellman | Julie Maynes | Janine Saatman | Different Drummers Kitchen |
| Ellen Morosoff Perrick | Sharon Lee McNulty | Ron Schubin | DiNapoli Opticians |
| Frederick M. Perkins | Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Messina | Jonathan B. Skinner | Gay Doolittle |
| Ursula Poland | Marion F. Michaels | Ericka Small | Eleanor Stein |
| John & Avis Randall | Ronald H. Miller | Gwen Spicer & David Fitzgerald | Ellie Peters |
| Judith Ratner | Ilena Muhlich | Bruce Tulloch | Emil Nagengast Florist |
| Arden Rauch | Jacqueline Murphy | Samuel & Sandra Van Hoesen | French's Hollow Fairways |
| Howard & Betty Roxborough | Robert & Eileen Myers | Glenn & Martha Winchester | Goodings Skin Systems |
| Nancy E. Rutenber | Roberta Nunn | | Indian Ladder Farm |
| Marion Schwager & Roman Hedges | Jeffrey O'Donnell | <u>Honorarium</u> | Jean Gehring |
| Paul Scilipoi & Carly Wright | Richard A. Orsi | In honor of Blanche Peck: | Jeff & Judy Leon |
| Audrey Seidman | John Overbeck & Donna May Crego | Gary & Pamela Kleppel | John & Peggy Sherman |
| Joanne Seltzer | Ron, Carol & Stacy Palmer | | Judy Thomson |
| MaryAnn & Bruce Shubert | Lorraine Plauth | <u>Memorials</u> | Kevin Kuhne |
| Loretta Simon | Paul & Diana Praus | <u>David Martin:</u> | Laura Paris |
| Jacqueline Skolnik | David M. Rhodes | Michael & Mary Baleszen | Little Book House |
| Don Snell | Saul Rigberg | Pete & Shari Clason | Lorraine Smith |
| Smith's Tavern | Susan & Bob Rivers | Sally Daly | Marvin Bototsky |
| Peter Stoj & Mona Wasserman | Don & Cecilia Rodbell | Roberta J. Glatz | Mary Minshell, The Scissors Society |
| Francis R. Taormina | Richard & Mary Ann Ronconi | John & Jean Hartigan | Nails by Nicole |
| Henry & Terry Tedeschi | Paul Rosenberg | Marc & Christine Heller | Oliver's Beverage Center |
| Hertha Thayer | Judy Scanlon | Mark & Kristen King | Orchard Creek Golf Course |
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| Tri County Fair Society | Steven Schrade | Naomi Lewis & Charles Apkarian | Pearl's Petfood & Supplies |
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| Margaret A. Wallingford | Mary Ellen Stewart | Howard & Betty Roxborough | Sandra Walck Garden Design |
| Stephen L. Wasby | Erica Sutrin & Edward Horn | John & Margaret Sherman | Silver Parrott |
| Judith White | Corinne Weeks | Francis R. Taormina | Smith's Tavern |
| <u>Friend \$35 - \$49</u> | Arden Westbrook & Marshall | Virginia Ucci | Stephanie White |
| K. Balasubramanian | Clinard | Samuel & Sandra Van Hoesen | Steve Thomson |
| Fred Barker & Ann Lapinski | Joan Wheeler | S. Diane Wallace | Stuyvesant Photo |
| Elizabeth Berberian & Chris Soulia | Stephen & Carolyn Wilson | Stephen L. Wasby | Ted & Sherry Putney |
| Nancy & Charles Berns | Charles & Judith Wing | Corinne Weeks | Traditional Strings |
| Eleanor F. Bowman | Carol Young | Glenn & Martha Winchester | Jim and Lisa Vinci of Delmar Wine & Liqueur |
| Ahn & David Brandon | <u>Up to \$34</u> | | |
| Lonnie D. Clar | Albany Friends Meeting | <u>Melvin Osterman:</u> | |
| Teri & Joe DeMaria | Bessie Argiris | Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna | |

Consider including the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy in your will or trust

You can provide now for a future gift to the Conservancy by including a bequest provision in your will or revocable trust. Bequests have several advantages:

Your assets remain in your control during your lifetime.

You can modify your bequest if your circumstances change.

There is no upper limit on the estate tax deductions that can be taken for charitable bequests.

You know that your gift will benefit the conservancy tomorrow just as you intend it to today.

Bequests should be designated to the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, PO Box 567, Slingerlands NY 12159

(Continued from page 1)

Also in December 2007 we signed a land conservation agreement with Walter and Alice Gibson in Albany County to protect their 106 acre parcel. The rapid completion of this agreement immediately before Christmas was celebrated by both the Gibsons and the Conservancy. We can now be assured that their land, located at the top of the Helderberg Escarpment (one of our priority areas for strategic land acquisition) and visible from our Bennett Hill Preserve, will remain free from development.

Our new Schiffendecker Preserve consists of 39 acres along Bender Lane and behind the Lowes-WalMart complex in the Town of Bethlehem. We acquired it from the Nigro Corporation. We are currently developing a management plan to include public access and trails.

Goal II, Steward Conserved Lands

Wolf Creek Falls Preserve, a gift from Steve Brown in 2006, was formally opened to the public in November 2007. This 138-acre preserve offers over three miles of trails. A grant from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program, administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program with support from the State of New York, provided funding for a parking area, kiosk and trail work. We thank all of the volunteers who worked to open this property to the public.

Volunteers produced significant improvements in other preserves. Cousins Chris and Jared Joyce, working on Eagle Scout projects, established trails at our Swift Preserve and at the Normans Kill Preserve parcel at the end of Normans Kill Boulevard. Spiro Socaris expanded the trail network at the Normans Kill Preserve on Delaware Avenue to provide access to the creek. Spiro, Pete Seagle and Dan Driscoll volunteered backbreaking labor clearing the trails blocked by the massive trees that came down in the severe storm on July 10. The Holt and Bennett Hill Neighborhood Committees, chaired by Gary Gurney and Steve Siegard, provided significant oversight of trail maintenance and stewardship activities at these preserves. Their help is essential to keeping these popular hiking sites open to the public.

Volunteers Judy Thomson, Pete and Dodie Seagle, Mike DiPaolo, Dan Driscoll, Marie and Ed Miles, and others put in many hours of digging holes and hammering boards to install kiosks at three preserves in Bethlehem, at Wolf Creek Falls and at Indian Ladder Farm, bringing increased visibility to our trails and land protection efforts. We again thank the Friendship Singers who donated the receipts from their spring 2006 concert to funding the kiosks in Delmar.

Goal III, Increase Awareness and Public Commitment to Land Conservation

During 2007 we presented five programs on the Conservancy and its work to nearly 150 people. In addition we conducted three workshops on land use issues for over 125 people. In February, John Davis presented the program "Open Spaces and Special Places: What Will Montgomery County Look Like in the Future?" which highlighted his research on the various uses of land and existing open spaces. In March Jerry Cosgrove presented a program on conservation easements in Glenville and in December Gary Kleppel spoke on land protection tools communities can use to protect natural areas and working landscapes.

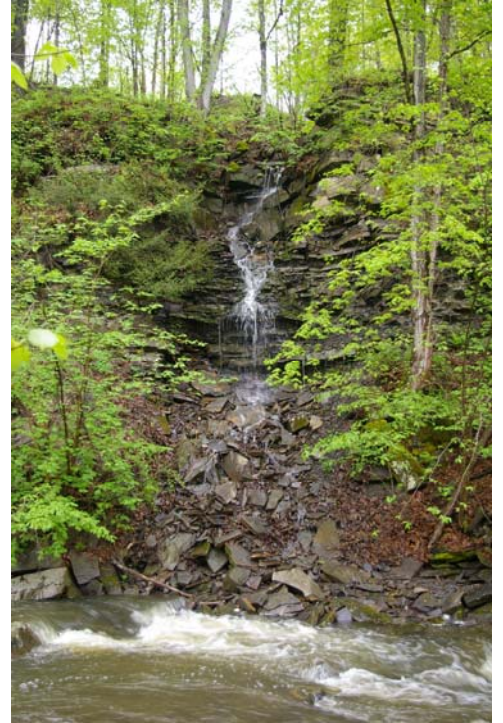
We participated in the Albany History Fair, Earth Day celebrations in Albany and Schenectady County, Clarksville

Heritage Day, Montgomery County's Sundae on the Farm and the Altamont Fair. Our Mohawk Valley Views contest was designed to create awareness of our work in the Mohawk Valley.

Three newsletters and our annual report were produced in 2007 providing an on-going opportunity for us to communicate our accomplishments with our members and friends. In addition, over twenty articles on our work and programs appeared in local newspapers and on local television stations. We received several calls following these articles requesting information on our work and preserves.

Goal IV, Strengthen Our Organization

"In perpetuity," that is how long our easements will last and we must ensure the Conservancy itself will exist "in perpetuity" to steward these protected lands. To assist us in developing a long-term funding program, the Conservancy, using a grant from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program, contracted with a fund development professional in 2007. Contributions from our membership increased in 2007 and a record number of members renewed their commitment to support the Conservancy. With our consultant's help we began to examine ways to increase our membership.



Schoharie Creek Preserve —Dan Driscoll

The 2007 Gala was a huge success. Generous contributions to the silent auction from many friends and members made for lively bidding and provided a significant increase in revenue compared to 2006.

As the Conservancy grows, the role the Board plays is evolving from managing the daily operations to implementing long term strategies to assure our future ability to acquire and steward important lands. Throughout the year, the Board Development Committee assessed our leadership needs and identified and interviewed candidates for board membership. We welcomed Judy Thomson, David Barnet, Chris Galvin and Steve Young to our board in 2007. Anne Reynolds and Val Washington left to take important positions with the Department of Environmental Conservation. We also said good-bye to Mike Sterthous, Paul Baitsholts and Mark King, whose terms expired at the end of 2007.

We look forward to another year of continued success saving "special places."



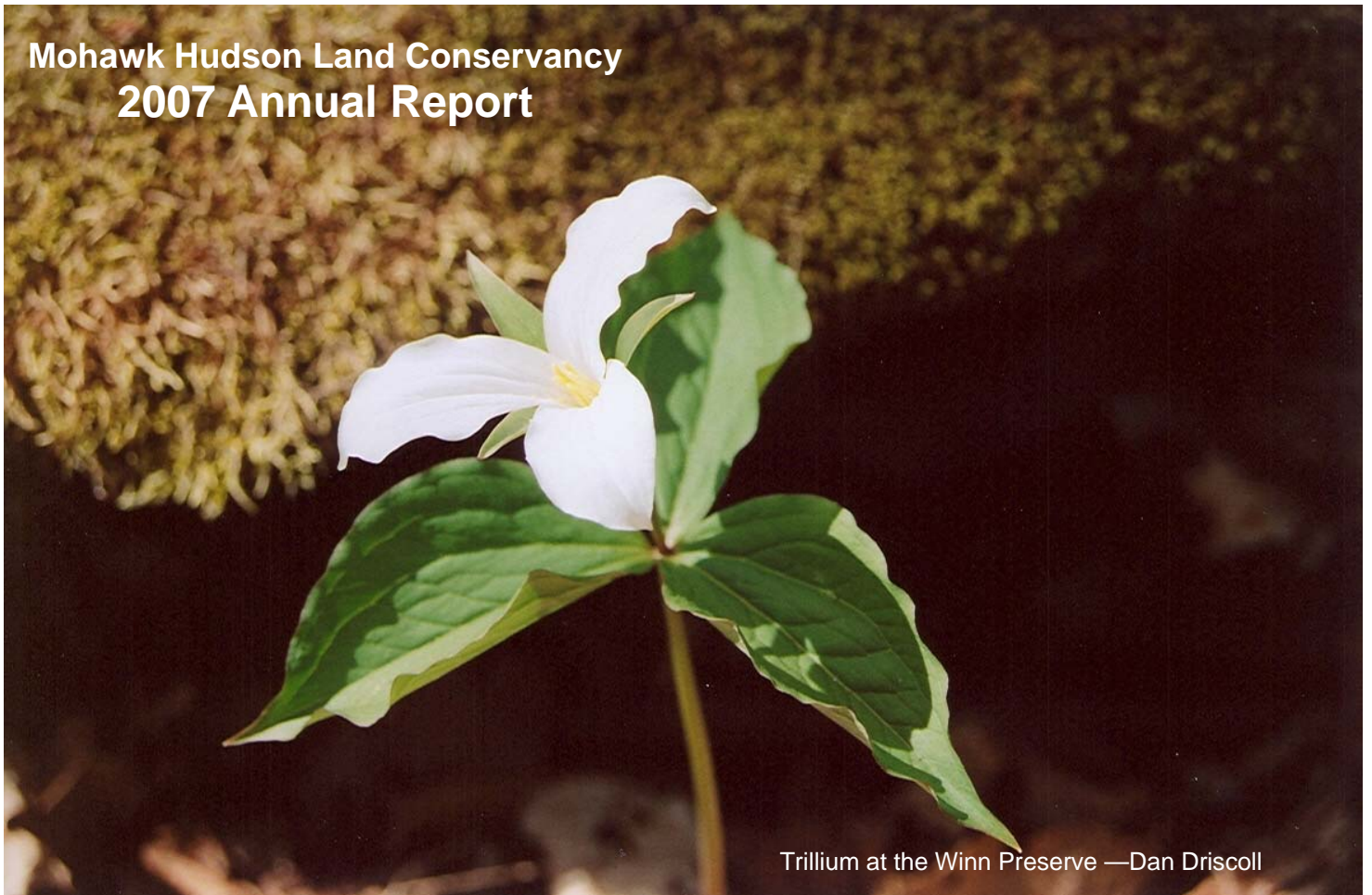
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CONSERVANCY

Saving Special Places

Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy 2007 Annual Report



Trillium at the Winn Preserve —Dan Driscoll