

P R E S E R V A T I O N

# *Views*

VOLUME 2

FARM & NATURAL  
LANDS TRUST  
OF YORK COUNTY



WINTER 2021-2022





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## **FARM & NATURAL LANDS TRUST** OF YORK COUNTY



Farm & Natural Lands Trust is a private non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization recognized by the IRS as a qualified recipient of land conservation interests. Contributions to FNL are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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**The FARM & NATURAL LANDS TRUST has  
preserved more than 13,000 acres to date.**

## **TO CONTACT US:**

717.843.4411  
skenny@farmtrust.org

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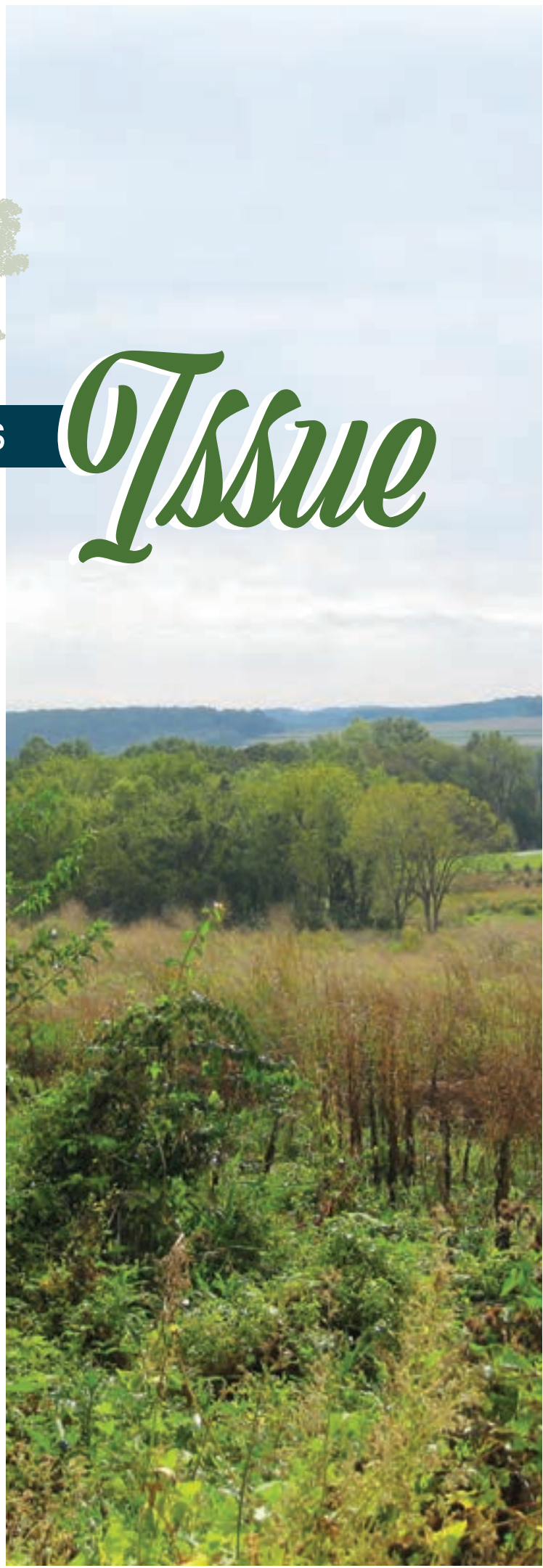






Photo by Laura Kenny



# Welcome

by Jamie C. Kinsley

Riding along the rail trail towards **Seven Valleys**, I see a beautiful burgundy barn with navy trim. A sturdy brickhouse stands close by along with a native plant garden surrounded by tall pine and cedar trees. I'm meeting **Sean Kenny** for a bike ride, where we plan to discuss barns, livestock, the flowering **Codorus**, and many other things country life.

As we ride, Sean tells **stories of the land he and his team preserved over the 13 years** he's served as Executive Director. How sometimes, the pace of land preservation can seem "glacial." However, when landowners finally sign the conservation easement, "**almost all wish they did it sooner!**" He explains the teamwork that went into the **new logo and renovated office building**. The pouring of **support from County Commissioners and citizens** through the **York County Open Space Committee** that provided reliable funding, advancing our mission.

Sean makes me laugh with his stories of **memories along the Rail Trail**, interesting landowners and the many mentors he's had in life.

For many of us, **Sean and Rochelle** are the reason why we **preserve our properties and support FNLT**. We already know that safeguarding our land is the right thing, but their knowledgeable and confident demeanor assures us. How do they gain our trust? **They educate us of our rights**. They follow through, making





sure our paperwork is filled correctly. They are the reason landowners are **informed, empowered, and, most importantly, proud of their decision.** A simple skim through this newsletter testifies to the happy preservationists who are also our neighbors.

Sean and I arrive back at his burgundy barn and brick house. Pointing to it, Sean tells me that he owes his home for his position with the FNL. "When I interviewed, they asked what I knew about their preserved properties," Sean says. **"Being an avid Rail Trail user, I told them how I always loved a house that was on a preserved property along my rides."** We gaze across the panoramic landscape. **"Many moons later, I'm now married with a family and living on that same preserved property!"**

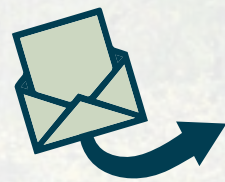
At the commencement of our bike ride, I set out to simply chat with Sean about York County's beautiful countryside. However, I gained much more than that. I witnessed a passionate visionary whose character and work ethic delivered a 'mom and pop' land trust into one of the county's most successful nonprofits, sealing my fate as a lifelong FNL supporter.

As a member of the Board, I'm extremely grateful for **Sean and Rochelle.** I know the dozens of volunteers, our community partners, and my fellow Board members wouldn't be here if it wasn't for your leadership. **We thank you.**



Photo by Sean Kenny

## *Your support* is the greatest gift



Enclosed is an envelope should you want to make a year end (or anytime!) gift of support towards the land preservation efforts of **Farm & Natural Lands Trust of York County.** There is a form on the reverse side of this newsletter you can fill out and hand off to your local postal worker! FNL is led by a small staff and volunteer leadership, so we make every amount of support go a long way.

**THANK YOU!** Another great way to support FNL is to pass the newsletter along to someone who might not be aware of our efforts. For additional copies to help spread the word, call into the FNL office or email [skenny@farmtrust.org](mailto:skenny@farmtrust.org).







# *Back in Action*

## with Sasquatch & Clay Shoot

By Sean Kenny

Below: Hamster Wheel Shave Ice by Kinetic Creations



After suspending all events for well over a year, FNLТ wrapped the Summer and started Fall of 2021 with picture perfect days outside, all in support of land preservation in York County.

First up, we gathered runners from the region to the preserved **South Branch Farms in Seven Valleys** for the 10th installment of the **Sasquatch Preservation Trail Run**. With two distance options of 5K and 10K – neither of them a walk in the park – runners were treated to a true representation of the types of landscapes FNLТ preserves.

Over the hills, through the woods, into the creek, over some horse jumps and on top of the **historic Howard Tunnel** – the Sasquatch runners age ranged from 5 to 82 and everyone had a great time. **Big thanks to the Kinsley family for having us back at South Branch Farms, and to Rob Kinsley, course architect and all-around great friend of FNLТ.**





10K- FEMALE	NAME	AGE	TIME
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1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Jill Krebs	40	52:10
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Julie Kerchner	31	56:30
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Tanya Navarro	51	56:37

5K- FEMALE	NAME	AGE	TIME
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1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Leah Navarro	11	23:09
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Julie Kerchner	31	56:30
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Sabreena Fahringer	17	25:17

10K- MALE	NAME	AGE	TIME
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1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Joseph Nardo	41	47:46
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Eric Ferree	43	48:25
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Adam Murak	34	48:34

5K- MALE	NAME	AGE	TIME
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1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Jesse Martin	16	22:08
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Matt Gulden	38	24:54
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Neal Barnaba	43	24:56



Veterans Sponsor







## THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:



- **Brown Advisory**
- **Brewery Products**
- **Signal Machine Company**

Kicking off the Fall was the **FNLT Clay Shoot**, this our **12<sup>th</sup> year at Central Penn Sporting Clays** in Wellsville, which is also an area where the FNLT preserved lands holdings are continually growing (and hopefully some of the CPSC property soon, too).

Many thanks to all sponsors, including **Peoples-Bank** who has been the presenting sponsor of the FNLT Clay Shoot for all 12 years. PeoplesBank President **Larry Miller** was honored with a custom made clay shoot trophy to honor all he has done for York County, specifically his many years of supporting FNLT. Not that he's going anywhere, but he's retiring after a 50 year career with the bank. We actually hope we see him more often now!

Stay tuned for more events in 2022, starting with our **Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**. Details will be coming early next year, but mark your calendar as you won't want to miss this one.

The year's Top Shooter was **David Defernelmont**, who also happens to make the sweet awards with his company **Signal Machine Co.!** The top team score went to **York Ag Products**. Thanks to all our sponsors, volunteers, shooters and hosts!







## Additional Acres join the *Redding's Beefeater Farm*

By Sean Kenny

Larry and Loretta 'Peach' Redding are likely the most familiar names in FNLT land preservation news over the last several years. You might recall a few years back we hosted our Annual Meeting at the **beautifully renovated Lake Club in Spring Grove**, which they had purchased and preserved. In total they have five properties preserved with FNLT, **over 350 acres**. This includes the recently purchased 17.46 acres adjacent to the already preserved **Beefeater Farm**. The Reddings worked with FNLT on amending the original Beefeater Farm conservation easement, adding the new acres to that property.

This new conservation easement with the added land further protects a viewshed along one of the most frequently traveled areas in Spring Grove, located at the intersection of Jefferson Road and York Road (Rt 116). This mostly wooded parcel connects to an area of the Beefeater Farm on which the Reddings have done a significant planting of new trees – **as you drive by you can't miss their hard work!**





# More Landscapes Preserved *on Trout Run Road*

By Sean Kenny

Longtime FNLТ supporter and former board member, **Mitzi Bensinger**, has added a new conservation easement on 26.55 acres, adjacent to her already preserved home property in **Springettsbury Township**. This new property is almost entirely agricultural in nature with a few wooded acres supporting important wildlife habitat.

Mitzi says, “One of my main drivers in placing this additional land into conservation easement is not only preserving the scenic views but also supporting the crucial farming industry using sustainable practices, and to curtail development pressure in my corner of the planet.” This amazing scenic viewshed includes **Rocky Ridge County Park**, which is located along an elevated ridge line to the south of the parcel. Recreationists on the north-facing slopes enjoy the viewshed while traversing this area of the park.


In addition, the Bensinger property is adjacent to a second preserved FNLТ farm (which we’ll add - we know Mitzi helped with that!) and in close proximity to other preserved lands held by both FNLТ and **York County Agricultural Land Preservation Board**. We expect this new property will encourage others to join with their lands to protect the resources in this beautiful area of York County.






# **Bupp Family Wilderness Preserved** *Between the Family Farms*

By Sean Kenny



The **Bupp family** has a long history in **Chanceford Township** and this newly preserved 32.8 property is situated between two farms, also owned by Bupps, which have already been preserved for decades with **York County Agricultural Land Preservation Board** easements. This completes preservation of this valley, connecting the properties along the entire western and northern boundaries of this parcel for a preserved area **nearing 300 acres**.

This land is almost entirely wooded with steep slopes and significant frontage on both sides of **Otter Creek**, a priority stream, which travels over 4,000 feet through the land. In addition, small tributaries on the property flow into Otter Creek, which eventually feeds into the nearby **Susquehanna River**. The junctions of **North and South Forks of South Fork Otter Creek** join on the property, creating a popular fishing stream and scenic view for residents and visitors in the **Chanceford Township** area.



You can see the environmental importance of this area! Historically the property contained a non-paved roadway, **traveled by residents in the 1800s** that accessed a mill located on the creek. There are portions of the foundation of the mill and the roadway visible today. **Many thanks to the many Bupp family members** who have cared and preserved this area for future generations.





# Farming Living

## Not always safe, always an adventure

By Jamie C. Kinsley

Large farms mean plenty of room for large parties. It's July 10<sup>th</sup>, and **Edward Potts** wants to cut his grass so his birthday bash would look beautiful. His six-foot tall frame and brown hair bounce as the lawnmower traverses the hillsides. Edward pictures guests arriving with smiles, bearing gifts and ready to celebrate. He wants his 98+ acre farm to look perfect. Like every other time, the mowing is going great, until he turns the corner at his mailbox.

Edward hears a sharp "bang!" Glancing down, he sees blood pouring out of both sides of the front of his ankle, right in front of the bone. He had been shot. "**I looked down,**" Edward remembers, "**and I realized the lawnmower shot me!**"

Unbeknownst to Edward, a .22 shell laid in wait, hidden in the grass (he permits hunting on his farm). The mower blades scooped it up, hurling it toward Edward's ankle like a projectile. So great was the force that the shell went clean through his skin, leaving a small entry wound and larger exit wound. Doctors at the hospital clean him up, but scars remain to this day.

"**Living on the farm is always an adventure,**" Edward says. He's been living in Wellsville since 1962 when his parents first purchased the land. Along with his five siblings, he grew up playing in the barn, running through the fields, and taking care of the animals.

Today, the property is recognized on the **National Register of Historic Places** for its agricultural history and architecture as the **Henry and Elizabeth Berkheimer Farm**. As a collector of antiques and preserver of history, Edward maintains the 1817 stone house, hay trolley, a 1847 Sweitzer barn, smoke house in the attic, the summer house used for butchering complete with iron kettles. "**It's like living history,**" Edward says. "**It's nice to go to a place that hasn't been altered.**"

His father passed away last year at 95 years old. "**My father would have loved to have this land preserved,**" Edward says. "**I want to keep the heritage alive.**" That's why he preserved his farm with the Farm and Natural Lands Trust — gunshots included. Even though the farm and all its adventures interrupted his birthday bash, **Edward wouldn't trade farming-living for the world.**



# *Stambaughs Give New Life* to **200+ Acres in North Codorus**

By Sean Kenny

**Doug and Sherry Stambaugh** returned to FNL to preserve a second property, and if you remember the first one, you'll know they love a project and getting their hands dirty!

Located adjacent to the **P. Joseph Raab York County Park**, this property was once similarly mined for iron ore in the 1800s – high quality **Codorus Ore** as it was known. Also like Raab Park, a portion was part of the **Sunny Farm municipal landfill**. During the late 1970s there was an attempt to expand the landfill and due to community opposition, the Township denied the request.

The existing landfill was exhumed and the waste was taken to **Modern Landfill** in 1989 and 1990, soon after the ground water and soils were tested and monitored on the site. It was determined the ground water was not affected by the former waste disposal. The site was still owned by **Waste Management**, and in 2003 the Stambaughs and two other partners bought the property that consisted of 455 acres. At the time of purchase a CAFO (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation) existed on the western end of the property, which the Stambaughs and partners quickly ceased.

The Stambaughs kept 206 acres after the other partners sold their portions, and since that time have been restoring the former landfill and CAFO sites on the property. This included removing a 1,000-foot-long concrete feed trough, fences and runoff berms. A bulldozer worked an entire week removing invasive autumn olive, ailanthus and multiflora rose that consumed the property. In its place **10 acres of native warm season grasses and over 5,000 Norway Spruce** were planted.

You would never know the rough history of this property after the Stambaughs efforts. Currently the property consists of **50 tillable acres, 138 acres of managed woodland and 18 acres of dedicated wildlife habitat** – a beautiful property thanks to the Stambaughs stewardship, which FNL is proud to now help continue preservation for generations to come.



# *Building the dream* **one generation at a time**

By Jamie Kinsley







**Harold and Sharon Stoneberger** tied the knot at age 20, beginning their married life together in rural **Fairview Township** on the family farm, living in a mobile home. Even though they're happily together, living conditions are rough. With no running water, they carry water from the barn in a milk can — a trying task for newlyweds just starting out. "We had no money," Harold tells me. For years, they didn't own a phone, and had to shower at Sharon's parents' house.

Nevertheless, the young Stonebergers ambitiously pursue a plan many of us only dream of: **building their own log cabin on the family farm**. Sharon's grandparents and parents lived on the land for decades, truck farming. Sharon grew up **"always interested in being outside because my grandparents, my grandmothers especially, were outside women."** The family planted, picked, and butchered together, transporting their produce and meat to markets in Dauphin and York Counties. **"It was a family affair,"** Sharon says. "I saw my grandma in the butchershop cutting up meat. I used to skin out the deer."

Harold credits Sharon's outdoor upbringing as one of the many reasons why they fell in love so easily. "We both hunt the land, both fly fish, both work on the goats," he says. "In a half hour we'll be turkey hunting."

For five years, the young Stonebergers built their dream home. "Yeah, it was stressful," Harold remembers. "But we have a lot of the same likes so it was easy to make decisions." However, a farmer's nightmare threatened to cloud their log-cabin dream. A neighbor sold an adjacent lot that surrounded their farm to a land developer. For years, the couple fretted over McMansions ruining their views. **"I didn't want it developed,"** Harold says, lamenting the memory. "Properties all up against my farm, all along the back of it, on my ridge."

Harold and Sharon talked it over. They didn't want encroaching houses, so they approached the developer. Fortunately for them, unplanned increases in paved road expenses forced the developer to rethink the project. He sold the land to the Stonebergers who have currently preserved 124 acres of it with Farm & Natural Lands Trust of York County.

It's been over forty years since they got married. Today, they grow soybeans, corn, and hay. They also raise Boer goats. Their daughter sells fruit, vegetables, and flowers at a nearby roadside stand. **"Farming runs in the family,"** Harold says. "We lived here and farmed ever since." With the land properly preserved, the family will go on farming for generations to come.





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## Love what you've read in this newsletter?

All support of FNLТ goes directly to our important agricultural and environmental preservation work. We make your support of any amount go a long way, as preservation is important now, and for generations to come.



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Contributions can also be made online via credit card at [www.farmtrust.org](http://www.farmtrust.org).

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling toll-free within PA: 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.