

Winter fun UNITES NEWBURGH COMMUNITY

Smiles outshone the sun at our second annual Presidents' Day Winter Fest, held at the restored Crystal Lake park in Newburgh. Despite cloudy skies, more than 200 children and their families took part in seasonal activities and explored this long-neglected natural treasure in the heart of their city. This great community celebration was made possible by the dozen local partners who co-hosted the event with us.



Eva Detich





John Halpern

A Leader's Inspiring Legacy— Productive & Climate-Friendly Farms

I begin this letter on a sad note, as we mourn the passing of Lisina Hoch, a great champion of the Hudson Valley and natural treasures around the world.

A Vice Chair of Scenic Hudson's Board, Lisina generously provided leadership and generous support for all aspects of our mission through her longstanding service. A "Grande Dame" of the Hudson Valley and extraordinary citizen of the world, she will be equally remembered as warm, kind and elegant. Befitting Lisina's global commitment to protecting the environment, Scenic Hudson honored her with our International Visionary Award in 2016. I will sorely miss her wise and inspirational counsel.

Lisina was one of the first supporters of Scenic Hudson's Hudson Valley-New York City Foodshed Conservation Plan. Inspired by her leadership, we are working to make the valley more resilient to the impacts of climate change, another cause to which she was committed. We have ramped up our collaboration with farmers and land trust partners to achieve win-win results—trapping carbon and methane in farm soils, where they increase productivity, rather than releasing them into the atmosphere as greenhouse gases.

To gauge local farmers' receptivity to regenerative farming methods, we commissioned a six-month study. Feedback from nearly 200 farmers and other agricultural stakeholders show promising opportunities to promote greenhouse gas mitigation on farms we seek to conserve. Now we're exploring next steps to implement the study's recommendations.

For several years, we've been a partner with Abby Rockefeller, Ben Banks-Dobson and the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole on an initiative to monitor and verify the ecological and climate impacts of regenerative farming. Founded by Abby and Ben, the project is based at Hudson Carbon, on the Rockefeller farms in Columbia County, including Old Mud Creek Farm in Livingston, home to the Scenic Hudson Soil Laboratory.

Right now, we're advocating for state funding to collect additional data about the effectiveness of regenerative farming in sequestering carbon and improving soils on Columbia and Dutchess county farms participating in the Carbon Farming Pilot Study. Gov. Cuomo's 2019 budget includes funds for the two-year study, initially proposed by Assemblywoman Didi Barrett. (See back page for how you can help secure legislators' support for it.)

We're so grateful for Governor Cuomo's leadership and the farm families who partner with us to protect their productive lands, and for those dedicated to helping us combat the greatest threat to our planet.

Ned Sullivan, President



LISINA HOCH

Benefits Abound from Recent Land Saves

Providing great potential to enhance opportunities for boating, fishing, birdwatching and nature studies adjacent to the popular Stockport Flats unit of the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve, we conserved 113 acres—including nearly 1.5 miles of shoreline—on **Stockport Creek** in Columbia County. The preserved land includes a nine-acre island in the creek, a major Hudson River tributary that provides invaluable habitat for many imperiled fish species.

Helping to sustain operations at **The Farm at Miller's Crossing** (right)—which supplies fresh produce to consumers via a CSA and an on-site store—we partnered with the Cashen family, Armonia LLC, Columbia Land Conservancy and Equity Trust to conserve nearly 400 acres in Claverack. The transaction, which restricts any future sale of the land to a qualified farmer at farm value, received funding from the state's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Program.

And providing Poughkeepsie residents with new opportunities to explore nature and the history of their community, we partnered with Springside Landscape Restoration to protect two acres containing a key feature of the **Springside** estate designed by Andrew Jackson Downing, the "father" of American landscape architecture. A National Historic Landmark open daily to the public, Springside is the only largely intact and documented example of Downing's work.



ADVOCACY LOGBOOK



Victory: Keeping open cherished places for fishing, boating and hunting, Amtrak has withdrawn plans to build fences at riverfront sites in Dutchess and Columbia counties. We commissioned a study highlighting barrier-free alternatives that improve rail safety without restricting recreational access, and shared them with over 100 local officials and citizens at a December forum. Amtrak isn't abandoning the plan, but says it will work with impacted communities and state agencies to revise it.

Victory: A groundswell of opposition to Glidepath's plan to construct a new, climate-warming fossil-fuel plant in Ulster County resulted in the company withdrawing the plan and replacing it with a renewable energy project. Scenic Hudson partnered with the local coalition against the plant.

Alert: More air and water pollution and a blow to the state's ambitious efforts to combat climate change—that's what's at stake if the proposed Danskammer natural gas power plant in Orange County gets built. Let the NYS Department of Public Service know we don't need another fossil-fuel dinosaur: on.ny.gov/2FiZDgn.

Update: To restore safe fishing, drinking water and recreation along the Hudson, we keep pushing the Environmental Protection Agency to compel polluter General Electric to continue its cleanup of PCB toxins. Other important leaders recently joining our call—Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney and five of his Congressional colleagues, and 45 NYS legislators.



Pitch in for a Green, Prosperous & Healthy NY

Gov. Cuomo's proposed 2019 state budget contains a Green New Deal—a bold approach to confronting climate change that supports economic growth—as well as \$300 million for the Environmental Protection Fund, which invests in valley projects to provide clean water, protect family farms, create new parks and trails, and revitalize riverfronts. Please urge your legislators to support both. Phone them at 518-455-2800 (Senate) or 518-455-4218 (Assembly). More contact info: letnyvote.org/lobby-guide.

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SAVE THE DATES! It's spring—so spring into action at these free events.
More info: scenichudson.org or follow us on Facebook or Instagram

Fall Kill Creek Cleanups

Downtown Poughkeepsie

Saturday, April 13 • 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Join the neighborhood in restoring this natural treasure in downtown Poughkeepsie. Locations to be announced.

Earth Day Cleanup

Crystal Lake, Newburgh

Saturday, April 20 • 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Celebrate Mother Earth by giving her a little TLC.

Spring into Newburgh

Downtown Newburgh

Saturday, May 4

Gather with the community for a day of exploring the city's open spaces—from parks to hidden waterfront gems—and take part in fun activities for all ages.



Robert Rodriguez, Jr.

Free Guided History Tour

West Point Foundry Preserve, Cold Spring

Saturday, May 11 • 10-11:30 a.m.

Explore the ironworks that sparked America's Industrial Revolution and helped win the Civil War—and enjoy a rare glimpse inside the foundry's 1865 office building.

DON'T MISS: "Hudson Rising"

New-York Historical Society, New York City (nyhistory.org)

March 1–Aug. 4

Don't miss this exhibit about the river's evolution from the early 19th century to the present, including Scenic Hudson's battle to save Storm King Mountain.

