



LONG ISLAND
PINE BARRENS
SOCIETY

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LONG ISLAND
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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

Printed on recycled paper.

Credit: Scott Ross



MOONSHOT: PBS television hosts Kathleen Nasta and Richard Amper pose with a model of the Lunar Lander that transported men to the moon in 1969. The theme for the Society's 40th Anniversary was Long Island's Clean Water "Moonshot," representing the great achievement required to restore Long Island's water quality. The model spacecraft was loaned to the Society by the Cradle of Aviation Museum.

The Pine Barrens Society's television program airs on Cablevision Channel 20. The air times below are effective through October 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018.

Island-Wide Air Times:
Mondays at 7:00 PM
Wednesdays at 8:00 PM
Saturdays at 10:00 AM

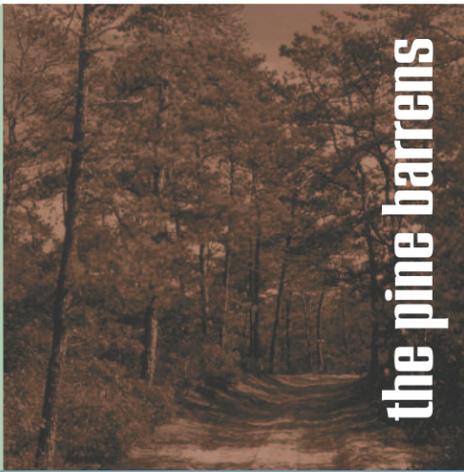
The program can also be viewed on the Society's YouTube page at www.youtube.com/lipinebarrenssociety.

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LONG ISLAND
PINE BARRENS
SOCIETY



the pine barrens

today

PRESERVATION: NOW OR NEVER

Four Decades Of Preservation

PINE BARRENS SOCIETY'S EPIC JOURNEY

Anniversary Celebration

The Long Island Pine Barrens Society marked four decades of land preservation and water protection at its 40th Anniversary Environmental Awards Gala, held October 19th at Oheka Castle in Huntington.

The event honored the three founders of the organization — John Cryan, Robert McGrath and John Turner. Also honored were three New York State Senators, John Flanagan, Kemp Hannon and Elaine Phillips, as well as leaders of the Long Island Clean Water Partnership.

Nearly 200 guests dined and danced in celebration of the preservation of more than 100,000 acres of Long Island's premier ecosystem, which overlies the Island's purest water and boasts the greatest diversity of plants and animals anywhere in New York State.

The Pine Barrens Society was created in 1977 by three prescient students, who blazed trails through the Island's wilderness, while educating Long Islanders and their political leaders of the treasure beyond the sprawling suburbs. For their part, Long Islanders themselves came to appreciate the Pine Barrens — approving referendum after referendum — more than a billion dollars to protect the Island's sole source of water, while preserving what has become its Central Park.

Today, the Pine Barrens Core Preservation Area where development is prohibited amounts to 60,000 acres and the Compatible Growth Area where development is strictly controlled amounts to 45,000 acres. Together they create a lasting legacy of land preservation and water protection for every Long Islander.

Long Island Pine Barrens Society Executive Director Richard Amper said, "We owe these wise men a debt of eternal gratitude for recognizing the importance of this great natural treasure."



Credit: Scott Ross

CELEBRATING IN STYLE: The Pine Barrens Society held its 40th Anniversary Environmental Awards Gala at Oheka Castle in Huntington.

Clean Water "Moonshot"

The theme of the Society's 40th gala was "Long Island's Clean Water Moonshot." Originally used to describe the United States' Apollo program of landing the first men on the moon in 1969, the term "moonshot" came to be defined as "An audacious project which is the result of a huge challenge, a radical solution, and the breakthrough strategy that just might make that solution possible." More recently, the expression has been attached to former Vice-President Joe Biden's "Cancer Moonshot."

Recognized for the creation of the Long Island Clean Water Partnership, five years ago, to reverse declining water quality island-wide, were Robert DeLuca of Group for the East End, Adrienne Esposito of Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Dr. Christopher Gobler of Stony Brook University, Kevin McDonald of The Nature Conservancy and the Society's own Richard Amper. The partnership was created and supported by the Rauch Foundation.

All of Long Island's water comes from underground aquifers, the quality of which has declined as a result of discharge of nitrogen into the ground, principally from wastewater and fertilizers. The partnership is working to reverse declining water quality by replacing cesspools and septic tanks with new, nitrogen-reducing technology and by reducing the use of pesticides and fertilizers on lawns and farms.

Since all of our drinking and surface waters come from beneath our feet, Long Island must control the human activity on the surface of the land above to prevent the introduction of contaminants and pollutants. With nearly three million residents, Nassau and Suffolk Counties have already exceeded the carrying capacity of our land and water resources. Environmentalists are now evaluating the best ways to reduce discharge levels to manageable levels.



Credit: Scott Ross

FOUNDERS: John Cryan, Robert McGrath and John Turner created the Long Island Pine Barrens Society in 1977 and worked to permanently preserve Long Island's premier ecosystem.

FOLLOWERS: Robert DeLuca, Adrienne Esposito, Dr. Christopher Gobler (not pictured here), Kevin McDonald and Richard Amper created the Long Island Clean Water Partnership.

the thicket

A New Threat: Oak Wilt

By Rob Cole & Jennifer Kotary

Rob Cole and Jennifer Kotary are forestry staff leading the oak wilt program. They are part of the DEC Forest Health team, responsible for monitoring the ecological health and function of all of the forests of New York State.

Oak wilt, which is caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, is one of the most destructive tree diseases in the United States. This fungus grows in the water-conducting vessels of oak trees, plugging them and preventing water transport. As water movement within the tree is slowed, the leaves wilt and drop off, and the tree dies rapidly. Oak wilt was first found in New York in 2008, but was not detected on Long Island until 2016. Once infected with oak wilt, oak trees can die in as little as 2-6 weeks. As oak wilt spreads, it could kill thousands of oaks annually in New York. Loss of oak trees could lead to decreased property values, tourism, home heating or cooling efficiency, resident the quality of life, and wildlife habitat. Proactive response and prevention of oak wilt can help lower the costs incurred from hazard tree removals along with replanting efforts needed in the future. The Department of Environmental Conservation's Forest Health (DEC FH) team has responded to this disease rapidly to help control the spread of this disease in New York.

Credit: NYSDEC



IN TROUBLE: An oak wilt infected leaf is discolored along the edge of the leaf.

warmer months, beetles are attracted to sweet-smelling fungal spore mats on dead infected oak trees. The beetles can pick up the fungal spores as they crawl around on the spore mats. The beetles, which are also attracted to fresh wounds on healthy trees, can spread the disease by carrying the oak wilt spores from infected trees to healthy trees – sometimes miles away. Tree wounds can be caused by construction, wind storms, or by pruning. The spread of oak wilt can be reduced by pruning oak trees now (from October – February), when the beetles that spread oak wilt are not actively feeding, flying, and visiting healthy trees. If wounds are made on the tree during the growing season, wounds should be covered with a wound dressing. To help prevent the spread of oak wilt through spore pads, DEC FH has removed all infected trees in the winter and is enforcing protective quarantine zones, which prohibit the movement of oak wood from an area, such as the Suffolk County Protective Zone.

Credit: NYSDEC



MORE THAN ONE LEAF: A pocket of trees rapidly killed by oak wilt. If left unmanaged this pocket of dead trees like this will expand each year in New York.

Depending on the site and the strategy being used, DEC FH may also cut down nearby trees within a root graft distance to the infected trees and/or dig trenches to cut the root connections to the infected trees to further prevent the underground spread of oak wilt.

In addition to helping slow the spread of oak wilt, DEC FH has an extensive ground survey and sampling effort from June to September. DEC FH uses a helicopter to fly over areas that may have oak wilt twice a year to look for trees that have lost their leaves. In addition, crews look for infected trees on the ground and visit homeowners who have symptomatic trees to see if the trees should be tested for oak wilt. Hundreds of areas were surveyed during 2017. From these surveys, a total of 143 tests were taken, of which only two areas tested positive for oak wilt – in the Town of Glenville. In 2018, DEC FH will continue to survey all areas where oak wilt has been found, including Suffolk, Kings, Schenectady, and Ontario Counties.

To help increase oak wilt management collaboration, DEC FH and Suffolk County Cooperative Extension have brought together land managers, stakeholders, and volunteers to form a task force. Members of the task force have hosted workshops, presentations, distributed outreach materials, supported monitoring by providing climbers to take samples, and supported management by facilitating wood waste removal. In addition to these collaboration efforts, DEC needs your help.

What can I do?

1. Learn to recognize the symptoms of oak wilt, including leaf discoloration and leaf loss in July and August. If you think a tree is infected with oak wilt, contact DEC Forest Health (foresthealth@dec.ny.gov) or call 1-866-650-0652.
2. Avoid pruning or wounding oak trees in the spring and summer, when beetles are the most active. If an oak wound occurs during spring or summer, seal it immediately with wound dressing.
3. Do not move firewood more than 50 miles, following the NYS firewood regulation.
4. Do not move firewood or oak wood outside of an oak wilt Protective Zone, such as Suffolk County.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS NOTES

“The Hills” Isn’t Alive With the Sound of Music

Credit: LIPBS



ENVIRONMENTAL HEROS: Southampton Town Council members John Bouvier and Julie Lofstad produced the two votes that killed “The Hills,” which needed a four-vote supermajority from the five-member Town Board to pass.

A mega golf resort, proposed for the Pine Barrens and state-designated Special Groundwater Protection Area, has been defeated. Dubbed “The Hills at Southampton,” the project by Arizona-based Discovery Land Company, sought a championship golf course, 118 high-end residences and a 155,000 square foot clubhouse/catering facility on 600 acres of environmentally-sensitive land near Shinnecock Bay – an already contaminated waterbody.

The developers spent hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to win approval for the project, supported by Southampton Town Supervisors Anna Throne-Holst and Jay Schneiderman, but environmental and civic leaders beat back the project with the support of Town Board members John Bouvier and Julie Lofstad, who opposed the project for environmental reasons.

Pine Barrens Society Executive Director, Richard Amper, said, “This was the biggest and baddest development project we’ve faced in decades. Congratulations to the environmental and civic communities, Town Council members Bouvier and Lofstad, and to the people of Southampton who fought this dreadful project, tooth and nail – and won!”

Credit: Google



JUSTICE AWAITS: The courtroom of the Appellate Division of New York State Supreme Court in Brooklyn.

Society Defends Lawsuit

A New York State Appeals Court heard arguments on December 11th as Suffolk County and the Long Island agriculture lobby sought to overturn a State Supreme Court ruling blocking proposed legislation aimed at overruling a voter-approved referendum.

The Society sued when the county and the farm lobby sought to expand development on land which farmers had sold the development rights to the public. The Society argued that the public would stop voting for open space and farm preservation if local government and the ag lobby could overrule a public referendum. The Society said that if the farmers wanted more development on farmland which they sold their development rights to, they must seek public agreement on their new demands through a new referendum. The court agreed with the Society but the county and ag lobby appealed.

In October 2016, New York Supreme Court Justice Thomas Whelan ruled that laws created by public referendum, could only be changed by a subsequent referendum. PBS attorney Jennifer Juengst said, “The farmers can’t pass a referendum providing one thing – then say ‘April Fools,’ and submit more permissive development by lobbying local politicians.” She asked the court to reaffirm the Supreme Court decision or the public would stop approving land preservation referenda.

A FOUNDER'S REFLECTION: Forty Years of Memories

By John Turner

Mr. Turner is a co-founder and past president of the Pine Barrens Society.

I must admit it has become a bit of a blur, as the “fog of memory” has set in, trying to recall many of the details of the past forty years in the Long Island Pine Barrens Society’s effort to preserve the Pine Barrens and open space throughout Long Island. Over four decades of work, thousands of memories develop — from tiny to big — involving all manner of things — conversations with people, remembering the details of a hike in the Pine Barrens, reading the specifics of some proposed law or Bond Act that would help safeguard the area, or poring over the details of countless Environmental Impact Statements about yet another project that would carve up another block of barrens but miraculously cause no harm, to learning about the biology of tiger salamanders.

Following are a bunch of my favorite memories (of the ones I can remember; I’ll need hypnosis to retrieve the hundreds of others!):

Two nature hikes in the early years of the Society stand out — one in the Manorville Hills, the other in the Dwarf Pine Plains. Both were in the early years of the Society and we were very happy that there was such interest in exploring the Pine Barrens. More than 40 people joined us on the Manorville Hills hike and we were fortunate enough to see an eastern hognose snake as we hiked through the hills that make up this rugged area. About 60 people showed up for the buck moth program in the Dwarf Pine Plains. John Cryan, one of the Society’s founders, had found a female moth and by the time the participants arrived more than a dozen male buck moths were fluttering around her cage trying to mate with her. I’ll never forget the sight of these orange, black, and white moths, so unique in their life history, jockeying for position over the bearberry trying to get inside the cage.

The first phone call I had with Dick Amper — calling to pick my brain about how to go about preserving a parcel of property on the east side of Lake Panamoka. I quickly gained a sense of his passion and determination during the call, but didn’t realize just HOW goal-oriented and passionate he could be. The Society’s subsequent hiring him as Executive Director ratcheted up the organization’s effectiveness 5-fold and public profile 50-fold.

Robin and Dick’s hospitality — we often had Society Board meetings at their delightful residence on the south side of Lake Panamoka and they both made everyone feel at home. I’ll always remember the jazz music playing in the background and the killer shrimp curry casserole that Dick’s wife, Robin would make!

The meeting on a cold, snowy Saturday morning — when several of us met to audaciously draw the boundaries around the main section of Pine Barrens we wanted to see preserved. Out came the different colored pencils and through the meeting, we outlined a 55,000-acre area we wanted to see protected in perpetuity. That informal map became the basis for the boundaries of the “Core Preservation Area” that was codified in the 1993 Pine Barrens Protection Act.

The Press Conference announcing the Society’s SEQRA cumulative impact lawsuit — held at Middle Island Country Club. It was a highly organized and thought-out affair with a wooden jigsaw puzzle, highlighting the ecologically significant areas in the Pine Barrens, serving as a backdrop. Little did we know this press conference would set us on an emotional rollercoaster as the suit wound its way through State Supreme Court, the Appellate Division of Supreme Court, and then onto Albany at the Court of Appeals. A related memory: that hearing at the highest court in the state, in a room with black-robed judges in a chamber and ornate dark wood paneled molding, while the attorneys argued their case is an experience that left an indelible impression.

The Oak Brush Plains at Edgewood is an area the Society has worked hard to protect. This land had been defacto preserved due to it being untouched buffer land around the former Edgewood State Psychiatric Building. We launched a campaign to prevent the state from selling the state-owned property to the highest bidder and to his credit, Governor Mario Cuomo, in two steps, transferred the property to the NYSDEC. Today it forms the Edgewood Oak Brush Plains Preserve, a green space in Deer Park surrounded by dense development. We advocated for the demolition of the 12-story hospital building, and I’ll never forget the percussion blast that ran through our bodies as the explosives went off that would bring the building to the earth.

The night in Albany when the Pine Barrens Protection Act passed both chambers of the NY State Legislature — the culmination of several years of INTENSE negotiations, the New York State Senate and Assembly overwhelmingly approved the measure after Senator Ken LaValle and then-Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli gave heartfelt speeches on their respective floors, urging their colleagues to support the measure. It passed overwhelmingly. Governor Cuomo then signed the measure into law at a bill signing in Southaven County Park, but not before giving one of the most beautiful speeches I have ever heard about passing a public trust onto future generations. It was public rhetoric at its absolute best.

The last memory: Another hike — I was finishing a solo hike about a year and a half ago through the wonderful David Sarnoff Preserve in Riverhead. As I was leaving the trail next to the parking lot, a family — a mom with her son and daughter — were on their way in. Small talk ensued but it quickly became profound to me as she said this was the first hike she had been on in the Pine Barrens but had so wanted to take her family hiking in the Barrens for many years and was excited to finally have the chance. She was so happy that the Pine Barrens was preserved for her to experience, but more for her son and daughter. The boy ran ahead excited to begin the walk and the mom said goodbye and smiled as she and her daughter headed in to explore the pineclad forests of the Long Island Pine Barrens.

Out came the different colored pencils and through the meeting, we outlined a 55,000-acre area we wanted to see protected in perpetuity.

Credit: LIPBS



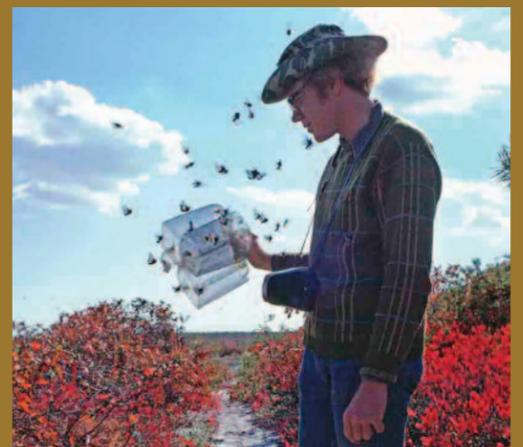
Turner leading a hike.

Credit: LIPBS



The Snow Day Map.

Credit: John Cryan



Cryan with buck moths.