

Land Trust Adds to Roy H. Park Preserve

By Tompkins Weekly Staff

The Finger Lakes Land Trust has announced today that it has purchased 25 acres as an addition to its Roy H. Park Preserve on Irish Settlement Road in the Town of Dryden. This acquisition expands the preserve to 242 acres and helps buffer Six Mile Creek—the source of Ithaca's drinking water supply.

This latest addition to the Roy H. Park Preserve is entirely forested and features several pocket wetlands. The parcel borders the existing preserve on two sides and includes limited frontage on Irish Settlement Road.

The land is located in close proximity to Six Mile Creek as well as a tract the Land Trust recently conveyed to New York State as an addition to Yellow Barn State Forest.

The property was purchased with a combination of funds raised through the Land Trust's recently completed Shoreline to Summit capital campaign and an internal loan from the organization's Land Protection Fund. Fundraising is now underway to cover costs associated with the transaction, and to provide for long term stewardship of the site.

"Acquisition of this parcel helps ensure the integrity of Six Mile Creek's headwaters," says Land Trust Executive Director Andrew Zepp. "By ensuring that this land won't be developed, we'll help ensure Ithaca's drinking water supply while also maintaining an unbroken corridor of habitat that is used by wildlife such as Bobcat and Fisher."

The Roy H. Park Preserve is a popular destination for outdoor recreation. The preserve features two separate access points as well

as several miles of hiking trails, access to Six Mile Creek, and a handicapped-accessible boardwalk and wetland overlook that was constructed in 2013. The site is linked to adjacent Hammond Hill State Forest by a hiking trail that was created in conjunction with construction of the boardwalk.

The Emerald Necklace Greenbelt is an ambitious effort to link 50,000 acres of existing public open space that extends in an arc around Ithaca—from Finger Lakes National Forest in the west to Hammond Hill and Robinson Hollow State Forests in the east.

These lands host 78 miles of the Finger Lakes Trail, two Audubon-designated Important Bird Areas, and several dozen Tompkins County-designated Unique Natural Areas. The Emerald Necklace is also recognized as a priority project within New York State's Open Space Plan.

The Finger Lakes Land Trust is a non-profit conservation organization that works cooperatively with landowners and local communities to protect those lands that are vital to the character of the Finger Lakes Region.

Since it was established 25 years ago, the organization has worked with partners to conserve more than 16,000 acres of the region's undeveloped shoreline, scenic farmland, rugged gorges, and majestic forest. The Land Trust today owns and manages 35 conservation areas that are accessible to the public and holds conservation easements on 114 properties that remain in private ownership. Additional information on the Land Trust may be found at www.fllt.org.



Photo by Marie Reed

A waterfall on Six-Mile Creek, near the Finger Lakes Land Trust's Baldwin Preserve on Irish Settlement Road.

Young Student Entrepreneurs Pitch Their Innovations

The IthacaSTEM Advocates, an affiliate of the Ithaca Public Education Initiative (IPEI) has created an entrepreneurship component to the capstone pre-engineering class at Ithaca High School.

With the help of community members, students have been taught and mentored as they develop a product idea before doing the research and design preparation for building a prototype.

In December, students pitched their ideas to a panel of judges at the Business Idea Challenge Night held at Rev, the new business incubator in downtown Ithaca. The judges decided which teams would receive funding needed to buy supplies for their prototyping during the spring semester of EDD, Engineering Design and Development of the Project Lead the Way series of high school courses.

There were six teams of students who presented the following ideas: MediMove for putting an auto-injector into a smartphone case, Full Cycle Bikes to use bikes to generate power in the developing world, Pump-Action Mods to improve the Nerf Retaliator for Humans vs. Zombies games, Lake Rake for a better hydrilla sampling solution, Human Power to create a wearable human-powered device to charge a smartphone, and The Plug Saver to protect grounding plugs on power tools to improve safety.

According to Ila Burbank, president of the IthacaSTEM Advocates and lead volunteer for this activity, community members worked with the students starting in October

during class time.

Teaching the basic principles of business plans were Brad Grainger of Cain Brothers Funding, Eric Eisenhut of Kensa Group, Brad Treat of Ithaca College, Dan Cohen of Cornell, and Tony Eisenhut of Rheonix. During the next two months, the six teams were mentored by Treat, Aaron Proujansky of Greengage, Brian Bauer of Rev, Bruce Lane of Purity Ice Cream, Chris Camadella of Vroom Consulting, Beth Mielbrecht at Taitem Engineering, and Burbank of Incodema.

Burbank notes that community members also supported students as field experts providing professional design advice in areas such as electrical and mechanical engineering. "Three Cornell students, Andrew Vaslas, Michael Walsh and Anthony McNicoll, demonstrated their own five-minute pitches to the Ithaca High students to provide a framework as they created their own pitches."

Judges included Zach Shulman, Director of Entrepreneurship @ Cornell; Tim McCabe, TC3 Chair of Entrepreneurialism Department; Barbara Howard, Associate Dean of Ithaca College's business school; and Luvelle Brown, Ithaca City School District Superintendent.

All teams received a share of the available funding. Funds were contributed to IthacaSTEM by individuals and businesses specifically for this purpose.

For more information about Ithaca STEMAdvocates go to www.ithacastem.org and www.ipei.org.

Raves for red Rioja

Northside Staff

Tasters: **Dave Pohl, ed.**, Dana Malley, Jason Wentworth, Mark Britten, Robert Bradley, and Jay Reed

The September 2013 issue of the British wine magazine *Decanter* features a blind tasting of red wines priced under \$30 from Rioja, Spain's best-known wine region. The tasting's judges were extremely enthusiastic in their responses. One taster states that he would have been impressed if the wines were double the price. Master of Wine Annette Scarf calls it "one of the best tastings I've been to at *Decanter*."

Indeed, the *Decanter* experts concluded, "the value for money these wines offer is unparalleled." The staff at Northside Wines and Spirits was thus eager and curious to blind taste a selection of 15 red Rioja wines priced \$25 and under.

The wines tasted were all of the *crianza* level. *Crianza* wines are aged in oak barrels and

then in bottles for a minimum of two years before release. These wines were thus aged longer than wines labeled *juven* (young), but not as long as Rioja wines labeled *reserva* or *gran reserva*.

Northside's staff was very impressed by the quality exhibited by this group of affordably priced wines. No wine received a below average score, an occurrence nearly unprecedented in Northside tastings. The general conclusion was that red Rioja offers wine drinkers some really terrific values!

A word that showed up frequently in the tasters' notes was "balance." The wines exhibited a seamless balance of flavor, acidity, tannin, and alcohol. It was felt that this characteristic made them excellent candidates to pair with a wide range of foods.

The staff selected the **Torre de Oña 2010 Rioja crianza "Finca San Martin"** (\$15 per bottle) as the top pick. A complex wine, its exuberant aroma mingles scents of cherry, leather, mint, and vanilla. Packed with flavor, yet elegant, the wine has a silky mouthfeel and exhibits a pleasantly "dusty" character on its long finish.

Try this lovely wine with a selection of tapas, roasted lamb or chicken, dishes containing mushrooms, or even with a seafood dish such as shrimp paella. Additionally, the Northside staff encourages its customers to sample a range of Rioja reds — there are plenty of pleasant surprises to be had at reasonable prices!

Northside Wine & Spirits is at the Ithaca Shopping Plaza on the Elmira Road. Phone: 273-7500. www.northsidewine.com



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