



# Orleans Conservation Trust

Fall • Winter • 2012



- Mission letter from President
- Winter Walk Schedule
- Third Tuesday Lecture Series
- Diamondback Terrapin • Great White Sharks • Marsh Life
- Latest Land Acquisition & Conservators • Donor Recognition

## News and Notes

### **Meet Meg Quirk! OCT's First AmeriCorps Cape Cod Individual Placement Position**

**This spring the Orleans Conservation Trust (OCT) submitted an application for an AmeriCorps Cape Cod**



**Individual Placement (IP) position to expand both our land management and educational programs. Because these positions are highly**

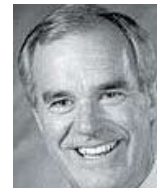
**coveted and very competitive, we were pleased to receive this grant. In mid-October we welcomed Meg Quirk, who will serve as Land Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator two full days each week until August 2013.**

Twenty-three, Meg hails from Fairport, NY., a 2011 graduate of Gettysburg College, with a major in Anthropology and a minor in French, Meg has always valued community service. Capitalizing on her membership in Alpha Phi Omega, the service fraternity at Gettysburg, Meg became involved with community outreach through Group Workcamps, an organization that sponsors weeklong service projects throughout the country. In addition to her community involvement, Meg loves to hike with her dog, travel with friends or family, read, play tennis, play word games, and listen to music.

*Meg says, "As a member of AmeriCorps Cape Cod Year 14, I am excited to combine my passion for service with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with various environmental issues. Working with interesting people in a wonderful place is an added bonus!"*

### **OCT Welcomes New Trustee**

**Mon Cochran grew up in Orleans and attended the Orleans public schools. After high school, he received his AB from Harvard in social relations and his PhD. from the University of Michigan in Education and Psychology. Between college and graduate school, he served as an Intelligence Officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and saw service in Vietnam. Following his war service, Mon joined the Child Development faculty at Cornell University, where he held a professorship for 35 years. After retiring from Cornell, he spent three years as a Visiting Professor in Tufts University's Department of Child Development, leading the Department through the process of redesigning their early childhood education program.**



Mon has a life-long passion for sailing, now primarily invested in an 18 foot Marshall catboat, and both fresh and salt water fly-fishing. His concern for watershed preservation and ecologically sustainable living flow from almost 70 years spent on Pleasant Bay, and 40 years hiking and fishing in northern Scandinavia, the Rockies, and the mountains of New England and New York. He lives with his wife Sheila on Pleasant Bay in South Orleans surrounded by land either owned by OCT or restricted by agreements with the Trust.



### **As you drive around Orleans you might see one of the OCT's new signs...**

It is hard to drive around Orleans these days and miss one of the OCT's new signs, which are located at the entrance or identify

25 of our 114 properties. After years of fielding questions about exactly where our properties were located, we hope the new signage will assist hikers in locating those areas with trails, as well as to educate the public about the ex-

tent of the Trust's property holdings. Not all properties with signs have trails, but if you would like to know exactly where our hiking trails are located, please call 508-255-0183, or go to our website at [www.orleansconservationtrust.org](http://www.orleansconservationtrust.org).

## Board of Trustees

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**Meg Quirk,**

*AmeriCorps Intern*

**Robert Smith, Esq.,**

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OCT is a recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

## Orleans

### Conservation Trust

P.O. Box 1078

East Orleans, MA 02643

Phone: 508-255-0183

## e-Mail

octkris@verizon.net

## website

orleansconservationtrust.org

Designed by Teresa Machie Designs

# Letter from the President

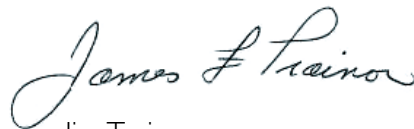


**The mission of the Orleans Conservation Trust is two-fold: to preserve land in the Town of Orleans for the use and benefit of the community, and to promote public appreciation of the environment through education.** I am

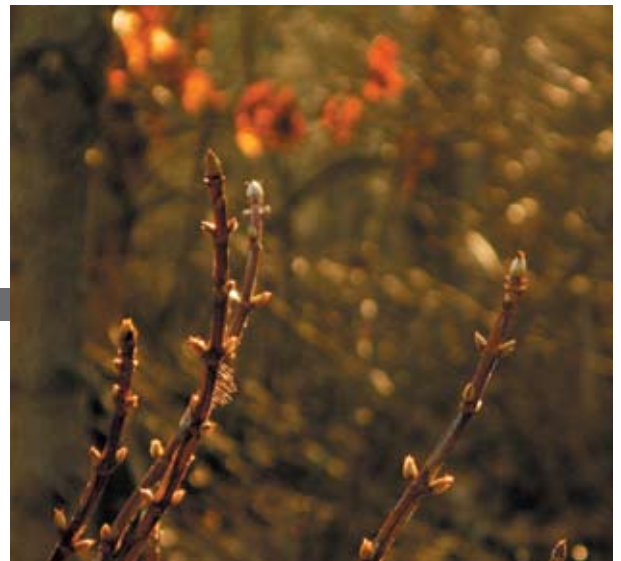
pleased to report we are continuing to make great strides in meeting both objectives. Through the generosity of our donors and the citizens of Orleans, we are close to acquiring two additional parcels which about our existing conserved land at Twinings Pond. More importantly, the public will be able to access walking trails and 100+ acres of OCT conservation land surrounding Twinings Pond.

On the educational front, I am very pleased and excited to announce our new lecture series featuring topics of interest to Orleans residents by recognized experts. Our "Third Tuesday Lecture Series" will be held on the third Tuesday evening of the months of January through May at the Orleans Yacht Club. There will be time to socialize both before the lecture, enjoy a drink with friends overlooking Town Cove, and talk informally to the speakers. For those who enjoy walking, we have a full schedule of guided walks over OCT and Town managed properties in the upcoming months. This newsletter includes full schedules of both of these upcoming programs.

If you are not already an OCT member, we hope you will consider joining. All of our walks and talks are open to the public, and there is no entrance fee. I hope you will be able to join us.



Jim Trainor  
President



## *Orleans Conservation Trust Preserved Land*

*Preserved to Date: 148 parcels of land totaling 625 acres, including more than 5 miles of public walking trails.*

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# The “Turtle Whisperer” and the Return of the Diamondback Terrapin



By Sue Reiher

**Hopes were high and optimism prevailed as White’s Lane sported a new look in the spring of 2009! The land between Henson’s Cove and The River was cleared to provide an ideal nesting site for female diamondback terrapins. Newly retired, I joined the volunteers of OCT and Mass Audubon, to begin monitoring for terrapin nests. But, alas, this first season, we encountered only one female - but, we didn’t give up.**

**2010 and 2011-** After hundreds of volunteer hours from neighbors and OCT volunteers devoted to removing invasive plants and trees, we began planting grasses and wildflowers, creating turtle gardens (sandy open areas that are ideal for nest location) and developed paths. Our efforts were rewarded as the number of females enamored with the White’s Lane site increased. Two nests were found in 2010, and two more were discovered in 2011, a great success.

**Spring 2012-** You can imagine the excitement when this year, the number of nests increased dramatically to six. Volunteers who faithfully monitored the site, either in the morning or evening, were rewarded with 13 hatchlings that were released in mid-September. Hopefully, the

next generation of diamondback terrapins will make White’s Lane their preferred and permanent nesting spot.

I have been lucky with my new obsession. I discovered the first protected nest in 2010, and came upon the remnants of a wild nest during the hatchling release that year. I also discovered one of the two protected nests we had this season, and found the results of another wild nest. OCT Trustee Bob Prescott teasingly calls me the “Turtle Whisperer.” I don’t have any magical skill, and I think my success in finding turtles, nests and hatchlings comes mostly from sheer luck and a stubborn determination to avoid failure. My experience working with threatened turtles has certainly brought me a sense of accomplishment, but it’s also brought me together with like-minded

people, very generous of time and spirit, who make success a surety.

### **Volunteers wanted.....**

Every spring and summer, week after week, tireless volunteers walk the site looking for the signs of nests. Then, when nests are laid, monitoring resumes to watch for emerged hatchlings. Next year we hope to increase the size of the volunteer group to cover White’s Lane. So, those of you with some time to offer and a love of things wild and beautiful, give some thought to joining a project with good people, satisfying results, and a picturesque and soul-soothing spot to spend a little of your week. The rewards can’t be beat!

Call: 508-255-0183 or  
e-mail us at [octkris@verizon.net](mailto:octkris@verizon.net).

### *Diamondback Terrapin Facts:*

- found in estuaries, coastal salt marshes and tidal creeks along the United States Atlantic and Gulf coasts
- sex of hatchlings is determined by the incubation temperature
- females lay eggs, preferably in sand dunes between May and July
- feed mainly on blue mussels, fiddler crabs and aquatic snail as well as aquatic vegetation, small fish, worms and carrion
- hibernate in soft mud during the winter months
- have large and strongly webbed feet



**Interested in volunteering?** Call 508-255-0183 or e-mail [octkris@verizon.net](mailto:octkris@verizon.net)

## Third Tuesday Lecture Series Special Feature

# The Sharks Are Here....To Stay

Join us at 6:30pm on April 16, 2013 at the Orleans Yacht Club to hear Dr. Gregory Skomal, an accomplished marine biologist, underwater explorer, photographer, and author speak about his recent shark research, which spans multiple fish habitats around the globe.



Dr. G. Skomal

During the presentation, Skomal will discuss his ongoing research of western Atlantic Great White Sharks, which involves the use of acoustic tags.

His primary focus this past summer was in our backyard where he explored the Great White's feeding behavior as it relates to the gray seals that inhabit the Cape Cod region.

This nutritional food source is attracting the sharks and represents an opportunity to understand their localized behavior.

If Dr. Skomal's tagging is successful, he will be able to study shark movement in areas of critical impact. These areas, which he describes as "seal haul-outs, swimming beaches, surfing beaches, etc." will have receivers located in the water. Those receivers will be able to detect a signal

from a tagged shark, and will record the time the shark entered the area, how long it stayed, and when it left. This information will be used to see if there are repeat patterns of entry into specific coastal waters for individual sharks, and to determine if environmental factors such as weather and water temperature play a role in their movement.

A senior fisheries biologist with the Massachusetts Marine Fisheries since 1987, Skomal currently leads the Massachusetts Shark Research Program (MSRP). He is also an adjunct faculty member at the University of Massachusetts School for Marine Science and Technology in New Bedford, MA, a guest investigator at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Woods Hole, MA, and an adjunct scientist with the Center for Shark Research in Sarasota, FL. He holds a master's degree from the



Global habitat of the Great White

University of Rhode Island and a Ph.D. from Boston University.

Through the MSRP, Skomal has also been actively involved in studying the history, ecology, and physiology of sharks. His shark research has taken him from the frigid waters of the Arctic Circle to coral reefs in the tropical Central Pacific. Much of his current research centers on the use of acoustic telemetry, satellite-based technology, and animal-borne imaging to assess the physiological impacts of capture, post-release survivorship, and the behavior of sharks.



### Great White Shark:

Link to track sharks is <http://sharks-ocearch.verite.com/>

- Known to prey upon a variety of other marine animals including fish, pinnipeds and seabirds.

- Known for its size, with the largest individuals known to have approached or exceeded 20 ft in length and 5,000 lb in weight.

- Matures at around 15 years of age with life spans of over 30 years.

- Sharks continually shed their teeth, and can shed approximately 35,000.

- Dr. Greg Skomal was given the privilege of naming the first shark tagged off Cape Cod this past September. To honor the founder of Mote Marine Laboratories, Eugenie Clark aka "the shark lady", he chose to name the almost 15 foot shark weighing an estimated 2500 pounds, Genie.



## Fall & Winter Walk Schedule

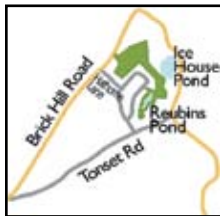
Join us for these free educational walks appropriate for all ages



### Bakers Pond Conservation Area

Trail guide Todd Kelley will give his interpretation of the Cape's Natural landscapes

Meet at 80 Baker's Pond Road, Orleans  
**Thursday, November 15**  
**9:00- 10:30am**



### Ice House/ Reubins Pond Conservation Land

1.5 miles of trail with a closeup look at two very different ponds

Meet at 245 Tonset Road, Orleans  
**Thursday, November 29**  
**9:00- 10:15am**



### Mill Pond Valley Conservation Area

Trail guide Todd Kelley will discuss animal tracking

Meet at 13 Champlain Road, Orleans  
**Saturday, December 15**  
**9:00- 10:30am**



### Three Ponds Conservation Area

Brisk walk traversing more than 2 miles of trail

Meet at 135 Quanset Road, South Orleans  
**Saturday, January 12**  
**10:00am- 11:15pm**



### Hosea's Swamp Conservation Area

Up-close look at a globally rare Atlantic White Cedar Swamp

Meet at 70 Quanset Road, South Orleans  
**Thursday, February 7**  
**10:00- 11:00pm**



### Christian Property

Botanist Rich Eldred will lead this interesting walk

Meet at 80 Portanimitic Road, South Orleans  
**Saturday, February 16**  
**10:00- 11:30am**



### Kent's Point Conservation Area

This trail winds through a beautiful cedar forest, offering outstanding views of The River and Pleasant Bay

Meet at 39 Keziah's Lane, Orleans  
**Thursday, March 7**  
**9:00- 10:30am**



### Kenrick Woods Conservation Area

Unique walk through large stands of White Pine and the very rare American Chestnut

Meet at 35 Namequoit Road, Orleans  
**Thursday, April 18**  
**3:00pm- 4:15pm**



*Swallowed by the forest,  
 I once again felt  
 it's hushed richness.*

Robert Finch



## Third Tuesday Winter Lecture Series



### **Voyeuristic Citizen Science: The Cape Cod Osprey Project**

**January 15, 2013**

Speaker– Mark Faherty

*Science Coordinator at MA Audubon Wellfleet Bay*

This talk focuses on the history of this species as a conservation success story, and we'll follow a satellite-tagged young Cape Cod osprey on her amazing journey from Eastham to Brazil.



### **The Glacial Origins of Cape Cod and the Arrival of the First People**

**February 19, 2013**

Speaker– Todd Kelly

*MA Department of Conservation and Recreation- Nickerson State Park Interpreter*

The story of how the melting glaciers deposited sediment to create what we know of today as Cape Cod. Also, how, why and where the First People lived and adapted as the sea levels rose.



### **Seals: Making a Comeback**

**March 19, 2013**

Speaker– Jesse Mechling,

*Marine Education Director Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies*

Recently, we have seen a resurgence of a number of seal populations on the Cape. Come learn about the natural history of these marine mammals, where they came from, what we are learning about them, and what the future holds.



### **Great White Sharks, Our New Neighbors**

**April 16, 2013**

Speaker– Greg Skomal

*MA Division of Fisheries Environmental Analyst*

Dr. Gregory Skomal, an accomplished marine biologist, underwater explorer, photographer, and author will share his shark research, which has spanned multiple fish habitats around the globe.



### **The Symbiotic Relationship Between Humpback Whales and Marine Birds**

**May 21, 2013**

Speaker– Peter Trull

*Naturalist and Science Teacher at Lighthouse Charter School*

In this program, Peter Trull will use vivid photographs and years of personal experience to explain the symbiotic relationship between whales and pelagic birds.

*JOIN US!*

**Where: Orleans Yacht Club 6:30 p.m.**

Doors open 6:00 p.m. (cash bar)

Entrance is free and all are invited

Lecture lasts one hour



# Window on Twinings Pond

**Where We Stand:** Thanks to the generosity of the Fleck family and the citizens of Orleans, we have received pledges, grants and gifts totaling almost \$500,000, which brings us within \$75,000 of the campaign goal of \$575,000. We are very grateful to those who have stepped forward to lead this effort, and we are very close to preserving this land forever. But, we need your help to make this purchase a reality. If you have not made a gift to Twinings and would like to be part of the effort, please send your gift to the OCT.

**The Flecks join a growing line of conservationists in South Orleans, beginning in 1974, when the Cochran family donated almost 60 acres of land for conservation purposes. In the intervening years, others have led the way in extending land acquisition in this section of town. One of the “crown jewels” in this area is Twinings Pond, and now with a critical mass of 100+ nearly adjacent acres, we are just steps away from purchasing the LAST two lots on the Pond.**

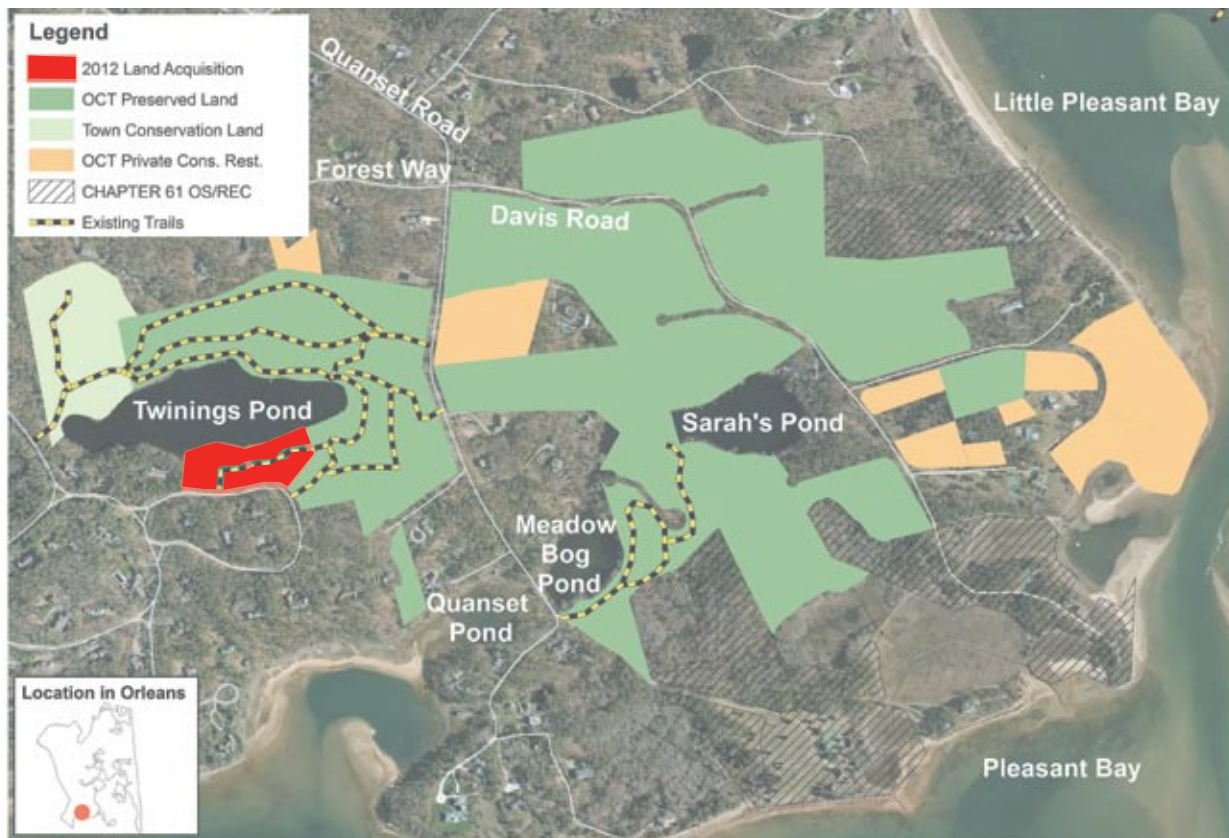
**Habitat:** While walking the surrounding 2 miles of trails, visitors traverse a thickly wooded environment made up of a dense canopy of pitch pines and black and white oak, with an understory dominated by bunch grasses and lichens. Small shrubs are interspersed throughout the property, including

lowbush blueberry, arrowwood viburnum, and bayberry. While no systematic inventory of animals has been conducted, the surrounding land is a well-known habitat for deer, fox, coyote, raccoon, quail, otters, skunks and hawks, as well as many other species of birds.

**Unique Feature:** Twinings, Meadow Bog, and Sarah’s Pond, which are in close proximity to one another, can be described as Coastal Plain Ponds, and are home to a mixture of unique vegetative species growing between the shallow water and the shrubs that surround freshwater ponds. The common and globally restricted plants on these ponds’ shorelines rarely occur elsewhere.

**Parking Tip:** While visiting this area, park along the road at 135 Quanset Road, South Orleans. Look for an OCT sign. To obtain a trail map for all of OCT’s walking trails, call 508-255-1083 or go to our website, [www.orleansconservationtrust.org/trails.html](http://www.orleansconservationtrust.org/trails.html)

## Window on Twinings Pond Land Acquisition Surrounding Open Space Map & Three Ponds Trail





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# Quiet Refuges

By Carolyn Kennedy

**When I slip my canoe into the waters of an Orleans freshwater pond, my training as a biologist clicks in. I may be there to check on water quality, but my eyes and ears add additional chapters to the story of the health of the pond. Early spring brings sounds of spring peepers and toads filling the air; great-crested flycatchers, eastern kingbirds, and Baltimore orioles call from the surrounding tree branches, after migrating back to the Cape from Central America. A red-tailed hawk takes a bath in a shallow edge. Beneath the surface, various species of fish and turtles utilize the zones of growing aquatic vegetation for feeding and hiding spots.**

Later in the summer great-blue heron, osprey, green heron, a variety of ducks and geese feed on all our ponds and nest nearby. The calls of bull frogs and green

frogs remind us of their presence. In the fall, tree swallows swoop over ponds to scoop up flying insects as they work their way toward Monomoy and head south for the winter. Ducks from inland head to Cape ponds in late fall and winter to find open water for feeding.

Walk on the OCT trails around Ice House and Reubens Ponds to check for muskrats or see a garter snake swim across the pond. Footprints at a ponds' edge may reveal the activities of raccoons, deer and river otter. These conservation lands between ponds are wildlife corridors, vitally important for species that must move to a new location to nest, mate, or find a new home.

What is a pond? Most of Orleans' ponds are deep "kettle holes," formed from large chunks of ice left 10,000 years ago by a retreating glacier. In the sandy soil of Cape Cod, their waters connect with the underground aquifer and tell us about it's condition. For many people ponds are places for recreation: swim-



ming, kayaking, fishing, enjoying time with family and friends. Some see them as jewels on the landscape reflecting the sun and sky on a beautiful day - a great place to build a house with a wonderful view. For others, they are damp places in the backyard – places to pile up yard waste and debris.

OCT performs a vital role in preserving Orleans freshwater ponds. Each pond is a mecca for wildlife. Forest soils surrounding ponds soak up rainfall and allow it to slowly seep into the aquifer thereby deterring flooding. OCT lands are vegetated buffers at waters' edge reducing erosion of shorelines and providing habitat important to hundreds of species. By reducing nutrient flow into ponds, these lands extend the health of our ponds.

OCT protects hundred of acres of conservation lands surrounding ponds in Orleans. Take the opportunity to walk quietly along our trails or join an upcoming walk to develop your own insights on their value to our community.



# Unrestricted Donations - Membership and Community Support - from 9/1/2011 - 9/1/2012

## \$300,000+

Susanne E. Tomkins Trust

## \$50,000+

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Norval & Ann Reece  
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Hans & Alison Rilling  
Ken & Patricia Rowell  
Robert Royce  
James & Debra Ruel  
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Owners Association  
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Jayne Talmage  
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Martha Abissi  
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Michael & Sarah Ciampa  
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Gary Clinton  
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Roslyn B. Coleman  
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David & Gail Colglazier  
William Colling & Pamela  
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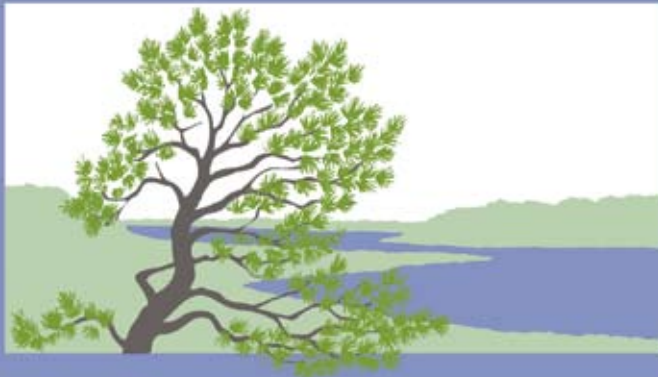
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