

## Come Out & Play

Discounts For Members. More Info Online.  
[www.Schiffnaturepreserve.Org](http://www.Schiffnaturepreserve.Org)

April 25, 2020 (Saturday) 7:00 - 9:00 pm  
**Music in the Woods**

April 26, 2020 (Sunday) 9:00 - 11:00 am  
**Yoga in Nature**

April 26, 2020 (Sunday) 9:00 - 11:00 am  
**Volunteer Day @ Schiff**

May 3, 2020 (Sunday) 8:00 - 10:00 am  
**Sunday Morning Fitness Hike**

May 7, 2020 (Thursday) 7:30 - 9:00 pm  
**Full Moon Hike**

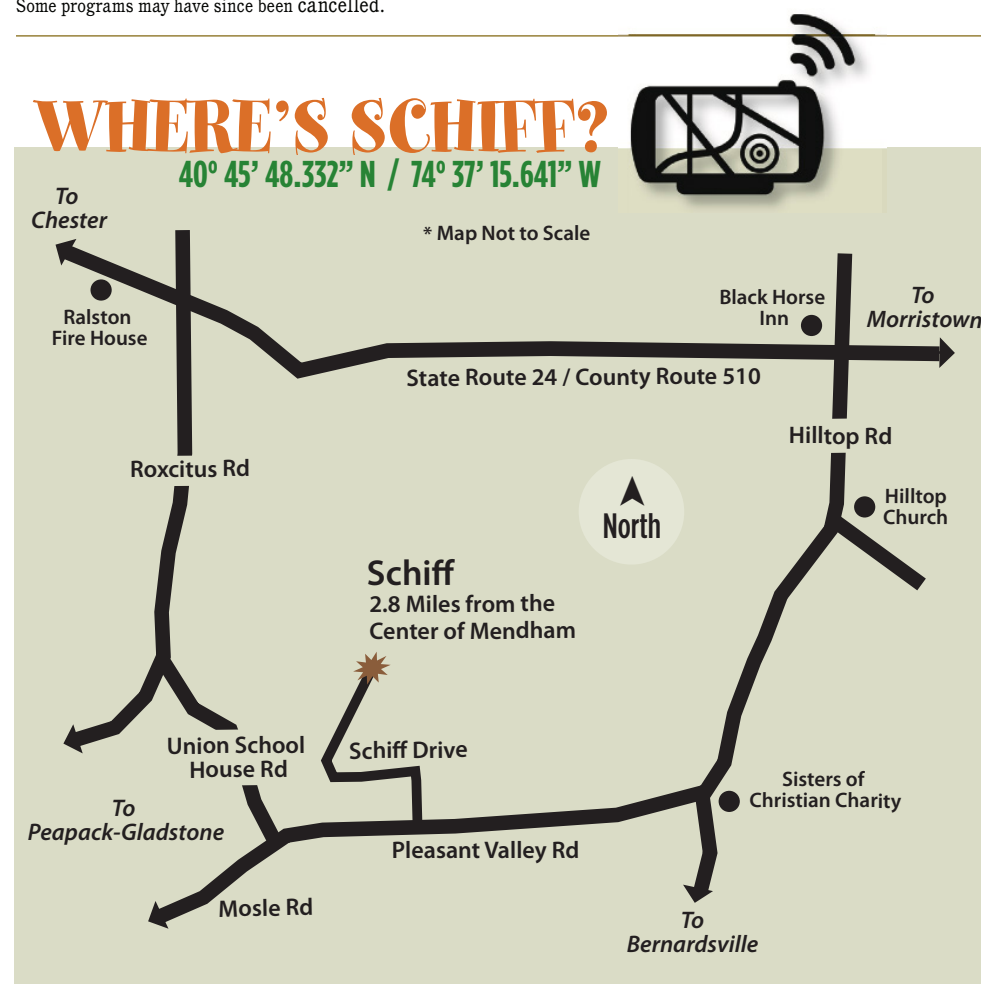
May 9, 2020 (Saturday) 7:00 - 8:15 pm  
**Monthly Gong Meditation**

May 17, 2020 (Sunday) 2:30 - 4:00 pm  
**Culinary Herbs as Medicine: The Herbal Apothecary in Your Kitchen**

May 17, 2020 (Sunday) 4:30 - 5:30 pm  
**Members Meeting**

May 22, 2020 (Friday) 5:30 - 7:30 pm  
**Campfire Cooking For Families**

Please check our website for current calendar offerings.  
Some programs may have since been cancelled.



## Support Schiff with a Recurring Membership

There are SO many fun and educational events being offered at Schiff for all ages. Please help us spread the word about Schiff by:

- **Telling your friends and neighbors** why you chose to become a member of Schiff. Ask them to support Schiff. We rely heavily on revenue from membership.
- **Showing your friends and family** our new and improved website, Facebook and Instagram posts. Please share our posts and events.
- **Taking pictures when you visit.** Use the hashtag #schiffnaturepreserve OR #supportschiff.
- **Taking friends to the preserve** to check out our trails, nature center, and programs.
- **Attending (and bringing your friends to) our Special Events,** like our Environmental Film Festival, our Annual meeting or our event for dog lovers: Paws for the Preserve.

# Field Notes

From Schiff Nature Preserve



339 Pleasant Valley Road, Mendham, New Jersey 07945-2922 • 973.543.6004 • [www.schiffnaturepreserve.org](http://www.schiffnaturepreserve.org)

## Prescribed Burn is an Important Fire Prevention Strategy

In February, Schiff Natural Lands Trust, in partnership with the NJ Forest Fire Service conducted a prescribed burn as a safe and cost-effective method of reducing fuels, vegetation and leaf litter that could contribute to an uncontrolled wildfire in the future. Prescribed fire is a planned fire; it is also sometimes called a “controlled burn” or “prescribed burn,” and is used to meet land management objectives. Prescribed fire is one of the most important tools used to manage wildfire risk today. A scientific plan for each fire, prepared in advance, describes its objectives, fuels, size, the precise environmental conditions under which it will burn and conditions under which it may be suppressed. Before any prescribed



fires are permitted, a fire management plan and a prescribed burn plan were developed. Each prescribed fire must meet all the conditions identified in a go/no-go checklist before ignition.

## R for Avoiding the Risk of Forest Fire

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, recommends that homeowners must consider the fire resistance of their home, the topography of their property, and the nature of the vegetation close by. All vegetation near homes is fuel for a wildfire. Consider creating a 30 foot safety zone around the house; remove vines from walls, move shrubs, prune branches, tree limbs, and shrubs and other landscaping away from the house.

Prior to the burn, Schiff staff, volunteers, and board members completed site preparations, posted signs indicating the preserve was closed, and sent various communications to all of its contiguous neighbors informing them of the upcoming burn.

With nineteen co-ed firefighters present, Matt Watson, Forest Fire Control Technician with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service, began with a safety and protocol briefing describing the burn plan. Once briefed, local authorities were contacted and all the conditions of the burn plan checklist were satisfied, the prescribed burn was first ignited along the White Trail around the Great Meadow. Later, additional areas were burned around the Pole Barn and Dan Baird Cabin. After approximately seven hours of work, all the areas were extinguished and the burn was deemed a success. We thank all the firefighters who conducted the burn for their efforts and our neighbors for their cooperation.

## News About Schiff's Leadership

By Alex Battey — Trustee

Since 2014, I have had the distinct honor and pleasure of serving as the President of the Schiff Board of Trustees, joining our highly committed staff and trustees in continuing the Schiff legacy of community-based conservation here in Morris County. As my tenure comes to an end, I am so grateful for the continued active support from our members, volunteers, donors, neighbors, and other supporters that allows us to be the stewards for 768 acres of preserved open space, open to the public. As I reflect on my time as president, some of our key accomplishments over the past six years include:

- Continued success of our annual Summer Nature Program for Kids, now in its 17th season. (Registration is now open!)
- Renewal and expansion of Schiff's active involvement with girls' and boys' scouting groups from many local towns.
- Successful community outreach and fundraising activities, resulting in ongoing capital improvements and repairs to our buildings and grounds.
- Expansion of our Board of Trustees to include additional

neighbors and friends of Schiff with demonstrated skills in community outreach and development.

- Schiff's transition from a land acquisition phase to an operations focused organization with keen attention to managing expenses to fit our revenue sources.
- Continued use of best land management practices suitable for Schiff's size and scope, including our deer management program, invasive species mitigations, and prescribed burn events on the property.

I am thrilled to be transitioning the Schiff board chair role to Dr. Marissa S. McDonnell, a pediatrician and Brookrace neighbor, who has been very active in our development activities since joining the Board two years ago. Schiff's future is in good hands with Marissa's leadership skills and passion for continuing the Schiff story.

I will stay on the Schiff board, focusing on our Conservation and Stewardship activities, so I hope to see you soon out on the trails or at an upcoming Volunteer Workday project.

## Board of Trustees

Marissa McDonnell  
President  
Mendham Township

Bill Sandelands  
Secretary  
Mendham Township

Joseph Gomeringer  
Treasurer  
Mendham Township

Alex Battey  
Mendham Township

Patricia Charney  
Mendham Borough

Amalia Duerte  
Mendham Township

John Eade  
Mendham Township

Ken Rendall  
Peapack

Jeanne Rice  
Gladstone

Janis Slutsky  
Mendham Borough

W. Barry Thomson  
Williamsburg, MA

Alan Weinstein  
Mendham Township

## Staff

Dorian von Aulock  
Executive Director

Chet Komoroski  
Land Steward & Volunteer  
Project Manager

Holly Puleo  
Membership & Outreach  
Coordinator

Jennifer Chmura  
Christi Lorenson  
Summer Nature Program  
Co-Directors

## Welcome to our new Land Steward and Volunteer Projects Coordinator



Chet Komoroski

We are excited to announce that Chet Komoroski, our new Land Steward, began working with us on March 1. Chet has been an active member of the Schiff community since 2016, serving as a volunteer, member of the deer management program, and eventually becoming a member of the Conservation and Stewardship

Committee, where he served as hunter liaison. A master welder by trade, Chet has been a member of Sheet Metal Workers Local 22 since 1996 and currently works as the Lead Estimator and Project Manager for a large industrial contractor, Archer Day, Inc. Chet has two beautiful daughters and during his spare time, he spends every moment possible enjoying the outdoors. His hobbies include hiking, hunting, and fishing. We welcome Chet to Schiff and hope you will too.

## Schiff's Summer Nature Program embarks on its 17th year of nature immersion for kids by Summer Nature Program

Schiff's 2020 Summer Nature Program is set to provide endless amounts of nature-based fun for



children ages 4-13, while focusing on its mission to inspire and educate children about environmental conservation, preservation, and stewardship. Co-

Directors Jenny Chmura and Christi Lorenson are excited to announce some new additions to our programming! The preschool "Fledglings" program will now run from 9:00AM-12:30PM, following the schedule of our other

programs. The additional 1.5 hours of programming is designed to enhance children's time spent at Schiff, while providing more convenience to their parents. This year we will be bringing in "guest speakers" to provide fun-filled presentations relevant to the theme of the week! This summer's nature-themed programs include "The Cycles of Life," "Superheroes of Schiff," "Shape Shifters," and "Are Your Awake?." Children will enjoy adventure hikes, river exploration, wildlife searching, shelter building, wine berry picking, tie dye making, and much more! Our participants are sure to indulge in the beauty and joys of the magically wild natural world Schiff Nature Preserve has to offer!

## Farm to Table benefit dinner to bring new and long time supporters to the table

On June 20th, Schiff Natural Lands Trust will hold its second annual Farm to Table benefit dinner to raise funds and awareness about the importance of supporting your local land trust. This year, the event will be held al fresco at the Brookrace pavilion, offering stunning views of Lake Therese and nearby rolling hills of Pleasant Valley residences and farms. In honor of Father's Day, the event will feature a Farm to Table spin on Burgers and Beers featuring casual décor, a menu of local meats, seasonal and foraged fruits and vegetables, and home brewed beer from Wet Ticket Brewing in Rahway. With Mother Nature on our side, the event is sure to be a friendly gathering of members, friends, and neighbors.

Chef Paul Viggiano will be flexing his culinary muscles to create a mouth-watering buffet menu to satisfy both meat eaters and foraging curious vegetarians. Viggiano has been featured on Food Network shows including Chopped and Chef Wanted, participated in James Beard foundation dinners, and served as chef-owner of KC's Chiffafa House in Mendham, NJ where he twice received "Best New



Restaurant in New Jersey" recognition from the New York Times. Chef Paul will prepare our menu featuring beef and sausage donated by Riverbend Farm in Far Hills; local vegetables, herbs, and fruits donated by Alstede Farms in Chester; and foraged ramps, mushrooms, salad greens, and edible flowers personally foraged by Schiff's Executive Director, Dorian von Aulock. Additionally, many of the recipes used will feature maple syrup produced right here at Schiff Nature Preserve. The Burgers and Beer event is sure to be a smash hit with an educational spin, having a representative on hand to speak about the importance of sourcing local foods and Chef Paul to share some of his tips for preparing seasonal vegetables. Our guests are sure to learn a bit or two about local and seasonal foods while enjoying great conversation and forging newfound connections with like-minded supporters of Schiff.

## Schiff's Speaker Series brings a variety of interesting topics to our visitors

Schiff's Speaker Series hopes to bring interesting, educational, and entertaining speaker topics to the public. This year stands to offer a variety of topics for all to enjoy. The first program will be held on Sunday, May 17 at 2:30 pm in the Nature Center. Lindsay Napolitano, of Fields Without Fences, will present *Culinary Herbs - An Apothecary in our Garden*. Many of us are aware that culinary herbs and spices have traveled the world on ancient trade routes and within cultural traditions lovingly passed down through the ages. Herbs and spices enliven our favorite recipes and perfume our gardens in high summer. But did you know these familiar seasonings are also powerful plant medicines? Join us prior to the Annual Members Meeting to explore the healing pharmacopeia already growing in your garden and hidden in your spice cabinet! This program is FREE to members. Non-member fee is \$10. Lindsay will be on hand with her herbal blends for sale after the presentation.

Following on the theme of herbs, our next Speaker Series program to be held on June 14, will feature master gardener and pastry chef, Cynthia Triolo presenting *Discovering the Joys of the Tea Garden*. Cynthia will present a power point presentation with planting guides and seed starting information for the intimate group of attendees to plant seeds of a tea herb or two to take home. The class will feature the tasting of several teas, including Lemon Verbena, Wild Bergamot, Anise Hyssop, and Mountain Mint. While steeping and sampling each tea, guests are sure to discover that each of the teas have their own unique characteristics. Stay tuned for more news about the date and time of this program on our website.

Come fall, Schiff will offer the very popular *Scouts Reminisce* program, where we bring together former Boy Scouts who attended or worked at the BSA National Training Camp through the years it was operational at Schiff, from the 1930s until the 1970s, to share their



memories and legacy as Scout elders. The panel will be moderated by Schiff trustee, local author, and historian W. Barry Thomson. As was the case last year, we anticipate that the stories shared will illuminate the positive impact involvement in Scouts and time at the camp had on the development of the gentlemen on the panel. With memorabilia on display adding a rich dimension to the program, we hope to give young Scouts the ability to envision daily life at the training camp and inspire their connection to Schiff Nature Preserve.

All funds raised by the Speaker Series ticket sales support the land stewardship activities and educational programs offered by Schiff Natural Lands Trust.

## Schiff welcomes new Board of Trustees Member W. Barry Thomson



Schiff's Board of Trustees welcomes our newest trustee, W. Barry Thomson. After leaving a corporate career in New York, Barry has been engaged with many architectural and local history projects, both as an author and frequent lecturer. In his corporate career, he last served as senior vice president, chief administrative officer, and member of the five-officer chairman's group of the multinational retail holding company, Woolworth Corporation, now called Foot Locker, Inc.

Barry has volunteered his services as history consultant for several of the Mansion in May fund-raising projects sponsored by the Women's Association for Morristown Medical Center. The co-author with the late John K. ("Jack") Turpin of the two-volume work, *New Jersey Country Houses: The Somerset Hills*, Barry has also written a number of articles on various aspects of local history that have appeared in *The Black River Journal* and other publications. Barry was also the executive producer of two documentary films, one promoting the employment of people with developmental disabilities and one concerning the history of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Mural in Washington, D.C.

Barry has served as a director, trustee, or officer of several not-for-profit organizations and foundations, and has also consulted on various management and corporate governance matters. Born and raised in Peapack-Gladstone, where his family has deep roots, Barry received his undergraduate education at Drew University in Madison, and later studied architecture and urban planning at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University. We are fortunate and grateful for Barry's dedication and service.

## Recognizing Tom Rice's Volunteer Contributions Over a Decade



After more than ten years of quietly volunteering for Schiff, we think it's about time we recognize and thank Tom Rice publicly. Tom, resident of Far Hills and a long time member, has supported Schiff in a variety of ways. Rice, a partner and Design Director at Rice and Associates, is also the owner and operator of Heritage Home Repair. Tom has shared his strong skill set in graphics design and production as well

as his carpentry and repair skills to benefit Schiff Nature Preserve. Tom volunteered his time and talent on a number of projects such as designing and carving our main entry sign and the one for McVicker's Preserve parking lot; conceptualizing, coordinating, and playing for Music in the Woods; designing and producing the graphics design template for our twice annual newsletter, *Field Notes*; and much more. With an eye for design and a very handy skill set, he has made his mark and we appreciate it so.

## Schiff thanks Forlenza for their dedication to Schiff Nature Preserve

We applaud Forlenza Landscape and Lawn Care Inc., a commercial and residential landscape design, construction, lighting, and maintenance company providing routine landscape maintenance, planting, drainage, masonry, snow removal, and more, for they have joined our Business Partner for a Greener Community program. Financial and volunteer support from our business partners helps us serve as good stewards of these natural lands, protecting the air and water quality, and preserving the native plant and wildlife habitats for generations to come. Funds help us conduct prescribed burns, repair storm damage and keep our trails clear for hikers, runners, dog walkers, horseback riders and others who enjoy spending time outdoors. Located in Madison, owner and operator Max Forlenza is a member of our deer management program and is always eager to volunteer his time and talent in support of Schiff. Since opening in April of 2011, Forlenza has served countless homeowners and businesses all over Morris County. Please consider Forlenza the next time you are in need of landscape and lawn care services. Tell them- Schiff sent you! Call Max @ 973-727-1969.

