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## What's New in Princeton & Central New Jersey?

Reprinted from the November 2, 2011, issue of U.S. 1 Newspaper

### U.S. 1 Crashes a Party: Green Acres' 50th Anniversary

by Jamie Saxon

Virtually everyone who is anyone in land preservation and who supports land preservation was on hand at the 50th anniversary celebration of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Green Acres program, the oldest program of its kind in the nation.

Held at D&R Greenway Land Trust, the event drew guests from every corner of the field. Liz Johnson, chief operations officer of Isles, commended "the dedication of Green Acres over the years to urban parks, allowing Trenton to celebrate its history with memorable monuments and parks, and for creating open space for families and children who need space to play. We all have a connection to the earth, and we need to celebrate that."

NJDEP Commissioner Bob Martin, a Hopewell resident, thanked New Jersey voters for supporting all 13 land preservation bond issues, which have helped Green Acres preserve over 650,000 acres across the state. Congressman Rush Holt stopped by to commend "the great work of the Green Acres program staff."

Speaking on behalf of Linda Mead, CEO and president of D&R Greenway, who was unable to attend the event, board chair Alan Hershey said: "In New Jersey, preservation of open space is not a luxury: it is a necessity for the quality of life and health of our residents. The question that keeps coming to mind for me, when I think of today's celebration, is this: What would New Jersey look like today if we had not been bold enough to establish the Green Acres program in 1961?"

"The natural resources that cross our state — forests, waterways, marshes, and grasslands — make it a desirable community in which to live. But without state funding to buy development rights and to buy land for parks and conservation areas, we would quickly lose these things that we treasure about our state — and that give us a 'sense of place.'"

"The preservation of open space helps protect air quality, decreases air pollution, conserves wildlife habitats, creates urban and suburban parks, and preserves nature with trails where the public can experience the natural world."

Tom Gilbert of The Trust for Public Land said, "Green Acres has without question made New Jersey a better place to work and live." He also noted how much preservation work is left to be done with almost 2 million acres in New Jersey still up for grabs.

For more information visit <http://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres>

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Margaret O'Gorman, left, Jay Watson, Congressman Rush Holt, and Amy Cradic.

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