



**New Pond Farm**  
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*New Pond Farm is a broad-based nonprofit environmental education center that provides opportunities to learn about and appreciate natural science, Native American heritage, farming traditions, astronomy and the arts.*

*The farm is situated on 102 acres that host a rich blend of both natural habitats and farming terrains such as rolling pastures, hillside woodlands, and varied wetlands. This picturesque backdrop is dotted with structures that are successful in both form and function including 18th century barns, an Indoor Learning Center with multi-purpose rooms and a full kitchen, an astronomy building, a swimming pool, an Indian museum, and an authentically recreated Indian encampment.*

## Remembering Carmen Mathews

Reprinted from New Pond Farm's Spring Newsletter 2010

by Mary Anne Guitar (founding board member and president of the Redding Land Trust)

As we launch the 25th Anniversary of The New Pond Foundation, let's train the spotlight on the one who made it all possible — Carmen Mathews. Carmen wouldn't mind a little applause. On Broadway and in Hollywood they knew who she was but, she observed, nobody knew who she was when she worked the Farm festivals that had been her idea in the first place.

I told her she should wear a badge reading, "I'm Carmen Mathews and I made this happen."

It was love at first sight when she saw the old farm on Marchant. The realtor who wanted to show her something more manageable protested "it's not for you Carmen." "I'll take it," she said.

Even with work in Hollywood and Broadway, an apartment in New York to manage, she devoted her- self to the country place. She turned a wetland into a "new pond" leaving her imprint on the land. Before long, the property looked lived in and cared for. Carmen always noticed when a fence needed fixing, a garden weeded, a tractor repaired. "Life is maintenance," we used to say. She lived by that rule.

Living off the land was her dream. Even though she could have lunched at Sardi's every day, she preferred a glass of her own milk and a brown bread sandwich with a dollop of her own honey.

Long before "organic " became a buzz word, Carmen knew a warm egg found under the hens in her coop tasted better than store bought because those hens had the run of the place. No slouch when it came to

pitching hay or pruning raspberries, Carmen was out on the farm working alongside those she employed to keep her farm running.

I remember taking some out-of-towners on a tour and meeting Carmen in the driveway. “Come on,” she said and piled us into her little roadster. Chickens and sheep scattered as she revved up and we tore down the farm road past the pond she created, now rimmed with wildflowers she planted, up the hill to the Observatory she built and the lower barn she bought off the rack at Agway.

She shared her love of the place with friends and, later, with inner-city children and, 25 years ago, with all who benefit from the Education Center, school programs and farm life.

When Alvin Ruml, her financial advisor, suggested creating New Pond Foundation to insure her legacy she agreed. It meant giving up some authority but, being Carmen, she was still a presence. She was the President. How could it be otherwise. Those of us who served on that early Board watched as she deferred to Alvin. And, to us. “I think you’re all wonderful,” she would say as she turned the meeting over to Alvin.

When the business meeting was over she would invite us to stay for her favorite snack — freshly made popcorn (not even her friend Paul Newman’s could compare) and a decent sherry. So, in this year of celebrating all we have done together, let’s lift a glass to Carmen who made her dream and ours come true.

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