

GLORIOUS AUTUMN HAS ARRIVED!

The first subtle hints of wood smoke mark a seasonal rite of passage. Glorious autumn has arrived! Our favorite pastoral landscapes are brilliantly transformed by the surge of vibrant red and warm yellow leaves. Robust mountain ridges display a rush of fall color while stoic evergreens serve as contrast. Our daily walks and drives are punctuated by breathtaking beauty all around us. Cars sporting out of state license plates pause at every scenic vista and repeatedly remind us that none of this splendor should ever be taken for granted. How fortunate we are to be living in the community that we do. And how fortunate we are that many of the properties that we all cherish have been permanently protected for today and tomorrow. The special exuberance of Autumn helps us celebrate the favorite places that we all call home, such as Mills Riverside Park and Casey's Hill. We also invite you to venture out on some JULT trails and discover the robust seasonal changes up close.



KIKAS VALLEY FARM

Take Skunk Hollow Rd. in Jericho to Tyler Place and look for the small parking lot off to your left.

Follow tractor paths through acres of pumpkins and tall corn. Listen and watch as Canada geese settle on harvested fields, building strength for their migratory journey. To the south, forested trails connect directly to the farmland and serve as a VAST trail in winter.



WOLFRUN NATURAL AREA

Take Nashville Rd. in Jericho to Leary Rd. Turn right at the Stage Rd. intersection and then make the first immediate right onto a gravel driveway. Park past the trailer. Or drive down Stage Rd. and park in front of a pasture gate on your right just past a house.

The first entrance leads to very rugged land encompassing wetlands and remote wildlife habitat. The second entrance offers an easier walk along a VAST trail with old stonewall remnants, cellar holes and ancient stone cairns scattered throughout the property.



ACTIVE AUTUMN

Come join us on **October 20th** at Kikas Valley Farm for an invasive plant removal day.

We are partnering with the Jericho Conservation Commission to combat invasive Japanese barberry, which is over running the woodlands behind the Kikas Valley farmlands. Japanese barberry is a very aggressive plant, not only does it make walking through the woods extremely unpleasant, but it crowds out native plants and dominates the understory of our woodlands. We will be meeting at Kikas Valley Farm off Skunk Hollow Road at 9:00 AM. Parking is available at the designated parking lot on the left after you enter the Wingate development on Tyler Place.

Barberry is covered with very sharp thorns so gloves and protective clothing are recommended. Bring loppers and digging tools (spading fork, shovel) if you have them.

We appreciate your help with this ongoing project!



PAUL MAZZA

Reaping a Harvest on Conserved Land

For almost two decades, Paul Mazza has farmed about 90 acres of land off Skunk Hollow Road. This agricultural tradition became threatened when the Snyder Companies planned a 20-unit subdivision extending from Tyler Place. Thankfully, the houses were clustered in such a way that the farmland remained intact and in 2005, Snyder donated 280 acres of open and forested land to JULT. The land trust subsequently donated a conservation easement for the entire property to the Vermont Land Trust thus ensuring a future for farming and forest. JULT has leased the agricultural land to Paul for continued farming.

These days, Paul uses the property to grow corn, pumpkins and squash. He planted strawberries one year for a U-Pick operation but has decided to keep the berries exclusively at his Essex property so that those who don't want to pick their own can get some at the farm stand. For the last several years, every JULT member has been offered a quart of strawberries for half price as part of their membership. Paul's operation has grown over the years; he employs over 50 people and has two farm stands and a CSA.

Paul has made significant improvements to the land including \$60,000 worth of drainage tiles. "The land was nothing but a swamp," he said. "Instead of planting a seed, you planted the tractor." Now that the land is drier, he intends to buy a leveler to even out the surface. This year, Paul is expecting a good harvest thanks to the hot summer. He rotates his crops and believes that diversification is paying off. He is thankful to the land trust for the opportunity to farm close to home. "It's really convenient," he said. "It's nice to have the land close by."



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Farm fresh local food, extraordinary scenic vistas, wetlands nourishing remote wildlife habitats and trails for recreation and reflection... the Jericho Underhill Land Trust is dedicated to making sure that important farm, forest and wild lands are protected today for tomorrow. Please help us by **renewing your membership or becoming a member** for the first time. Please spread the word about our good work and encourage others to join too. Thinking of the holiday season already? What better gift than helping to protect the important places in our community? All members receive our distinctive JULT decal to proudly display along with newsletter updates. Join **today** and your membership includes 2013. Together, we can protect our critical landscape for the future.

Did You Know?

JULT is always eager to talk to folks about land conservation. Invite us to your living rooms, organizations and events.

We meet on the first Monday of every month at 7pm at the Community Center in Jericho Center. The exception is our Annual Meeting at the Underhill Town Hall which takes place in May. You are always invited to learn more about what we do.

There are over 1,700 land trusts in the United States.

STRATEGIC CONSERVATION PLANNING... WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

According to the 2010 National Land Trust Census, land trusts that had strategic conservation plans protected twice as much land as land trusts without plans. JULT has been busy over many months working to develop a strategy with criteria to help protect important places within our two towns. Pulling information from conservation commissions and other sources, this plan will help to visualize a future for our community and create a course to realize that vision. Key elements include protecting working farm and forest, wildlife habitat and scenic vistas. A weighted scale of criteria will depend on parcel size, contiguity to conserved land, presence of rare or endangered species, prime or statewide agricultural soils and natural communities. This plan will help us identify, prioritize and protect our community's significant natural areas.



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Help protect our future landscape...TODAY

Please note: All JULT memberships now run on a calendar year from January 1st to December 31st.

Please sign me up for:

- Conservator** membership \$500
- Steward** membership \$100
- Sponsor** membership \$50
- Family** membership \$35
- Individual** membership \$25
- Student/Senior** membership \$10
- Lifetime** membership \$1,000
(Beat inflation and avoid renewal notices!)

Other considerations:

- My employer's matching gift is enclosed.
- Please **do not** send me a "thank-you" gift.
- I wish to remain anonymous.

Please contact me regarding:

- Conservation options for my land
- Making a gift of stock
- Including JULT in my will
- Other planned giving opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities:
 - ___ Fundraising/Events
 - ___ Office/Administration
 - ___ Trails/Land Stewardship

Name _____

Address _____

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Please make **checks** payable to **JULT** and mail to the address below. Or you may **pay by credit card via our website: www.jult.org**. All contributions are tax-deductible.

