



# LAND TRUST NEWS

Preserving Open Lands In Our Towns

Fall 2013



Photo credit: Phyl Newbeck

## FALL IS HERE!

The subtle changes of this new season multiply until autumn has inevitably replaced summer. Our days are shorter and darker; our trees vibrant with color, our countryside cleaned of hay and harvested and many birds announce their departure to warmer climates. The hazy vacation warmth has been exchanged for the seriousness of preparing for winter; stocking the wood pile, banking the house, mulching the garden, and getting ready for the first snow. How special it is to call Jericho and Underhill home and to enjoy the natural beauty that surrounds us through every season.

## THE MAKING OF A VIDEO

It was a special day when JULT received a phone call from Michael McKnight. He simply asked if we would be interested in having a video created about our organization? "Certainly!" was our response. Michael has years of experience in this field and we were going to be the fortunate recipients of his skilled talent. The adventure in filmmaking was about to begin. We met and talked...what does a land trust do, and how? What are some of our accomplishments? Why is it important to support JULT? We met and walked and Michael photographed parts of the Wolfrun Natural Area, Kikas Valley Farm and the Barber farm. JULT contributed photos of Casey's Hill and Mills Riverside Park. We collaborated on a script about 5 minutes in length and we rehearsed through it once. Michael explained that a script running longer would not hold one's attention as well. We headed to Wolf Multimedia Studio, right off of Barber Farm Rd. where Peter Wolf expertly recorded our reading and then edited. Music was added. Michael tweaked and tweaked with the able assistance of his wife, Karen. The result is a splendid video that we are all proud of. You can enjoy it too by going to our website at [www.jult.org](http://www.jult.org) and clicking the play button on the home page. This is the story of a local land trust benefiting from a local, skilled and generous JULT supporter, along with local music by Full Circle and the video recorded at a local sound studio. What a wonderful community we live in.



We're on the web: [www.jult.org](http://www.jult.org)

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# AT THE KITCHEN TABLE

The Jericho Underhill Land Trust eagerly meets with landowners to discuss the land conservation process and to answer questions. Often sitting at a kitchen table, we talk about the steps involved, possible tax benefits, and time involvement. For those who wish to permanently ensure that their property will remain undeveloped, there is no better way than to work with a land trust. Here is a little more information from the Land Trust Alliance.

**Basic Facts and Resources for Landowners** Across America, thousands of people are determined to conserve the places they value. Landowners have a deep connection to their land and know the gifts undeveloped properties provide their communities: clear air and water, fresh food, wildlife habitat, and sheer scenic beauty. All too often these special places disappear forever because of development. Americans who want to conserve their land can turn to land trusts – non-profit organizations that work with landowners interested in protecting open space.

**What Does a Land Trust Do?** Land trusts protect land directly by buying or accepting donations of land or of conservation easements. They also educate the public and advocate for the need to conserve land. They can help landowners tailor a conservation plan to their individual situation and financial circumstances, and determine the property's conservation values and future ownership.

## **What types of land can be protected by land trusts?**

Land trusts protect a variety of lands, but many concentrate their efforts on:

- Watershed areas like lakeshores, rivers, streams, and other natural features
- Scenic landscapes, particularly those with local community, cultural or historic significance
- Working landscapes like farmland and ranch land have special significance for growing food.

**How Does a Land Trust Conserve Land?** Land trusts have many options available to them in order to conserve land. Two of the most popular options are fee simple and conservation easements. In fee simple, a land trust can conserve land through an outright purchase or donation, in which the landowner sells or grants all rights, title and interest in the property to the land trust. The land trust maintains perpetual stewardship and management responsibility for the land. It owns the land and may grant conservation easements on land it owns in fee to another conservation organization, agency or town. A conservation easement (or conservation restriction) is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. It allows the landowner to continue to own and use the land and to sell it or pass it on to heirs. A landowner may sell a conservation easement, but usually easements are donated. If the donation benefits the public by permanently protecting important conservation resources and meets other federal tax code requirements, it can qualify as a tax-deductible charitable donation. The amount of the donation is the difference between the land's value with the easement and its value without the easement. Placing an easement on property may or may not result in property tax savings. Perhaps most importantly, a conservation easement can be essential for passing land on to the next generation. By removing the land's development potential, the easement lowers its market value, which in turn lowers estate tax. Whether the easement is donated during life or by will, it can make a critical difference in the heirs' ability to keep the land intact.

**What Are a Land Trust's Responsibilities Regarding Conservation Easements?** The land trust is responsible for enforcing the restrictions detailed in the easement document. Therefore, the land trust monitors the property on a regular basis, typically once a year, to determine that the property remains in the condition prescribed by the easement document.

<http://www.landtrustalliance.org/conservation/documents/landowners>

# YOU ARE INVITED!

## October 13th - First Ever Photography Walk

On October 13, the Jericho Underhill Land Trust will sponsor our first ever photography walk. Join award-winning Essex photographer Jerry Lasky on a walk at Wolfrun Natural Area with an eye for how to compose a beautiful photograph. The walk will begin at 2 p.m. to take advantage of the early evening light. Wolfrun Natural Area is ideal for photography because of the diversity of the terrain including meadows, wetlands and forested areas.

Lasky has been doing photography since childhood and helped develop processes to fabricate image sensors in digital cameras while at IBM. Since retirement he has honed his craft through workshops, books and practice. Lasky's work has been shown at juried exhibits at the Bryan Gallery in Jeffersonville and he has won multiple ribbons at the last six Champlain Valley Expos. His photos have also been featured on calendars produced by Fletcher Allen Health Care and the Jericho Community Center.

Although registration is not required, Lasky would like those interested in attending to contact him at [jerrylaskyvt@gmail.com](mailto:jerrylaskyvt@gmail.com) so he can coordinate the meeting place. In case of bad weather, the walk will be postponed to October 20. To view some of Lasky's photographs, go to [JBLaskyPhotography.com](http://JBLaskyPhotography.com)



## WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

JULT was pleased to be involved in a walk hosted by the Science to Action Project on September 21st. Titled, "A Walk into the Past", folks gathered at the south entrance of the Wolfrun Natural Area and explored the ancient stone cairns found on our property along with old cellar holes and an impressive barn foundation. Biologist Everett Marshall shared his knowledge of trees, plants and scat! The Science to Action Project is a community-based effort focused on community events, wildlife habitat, wetlands, uplands, and working lands in Bolton, Huntington, Jericho, and Richmond.

# THANK YOU!

We thank you for your membership support. JULT, an all-volunteer land trust, depends on our members for support so that we can continue to accomplish our local land conservation work. Keep informed about JULT happenings by reading the newsletter and also, checking our website at [www.jult.org](http://www.jult.org) and becoming a friend on our Facebook page. We will also post on Front Porch Forum. Together, we can protect important landscape today and for the future.



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## Membership Matters

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- Phyl Newbeck  
*Secretary*
- Hilaire Thomas  
*Treasurer*
- John Schroeder

# 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!)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
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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](http://www.jult.org)**. All contributions are tax-deductible.

**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

