



Livy Strong
Chair

John Koier
Vice Chair

Phyl Newbeck
Secretary

Hilaire Thomas
Treasurer

Sabina Ernst

Michael Lazorchak

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BURLINGTON, VT
PERMIT NO. 357

Forwarding Service Requested

Membership Matters!



LAND TRUST NEWS

Preserving Open Lands In Our Towns

Spring 2019



Mobbs Farm

photo credit: Terry Hook

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!)

Please contact me regarding:

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

Other Considerations:

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

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

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.

PROTECTING MOBBS FARM

An extraordinary expanse of open meadow with forested hillside is available for recreational enjoyment in Jericho. Known as Mobbs Farm, this land was acquired by the Town in 1970 and exceeds 260 acres. It is roughly separated by Fitzsimonds Road with Mill Brook forming some of the boundary along Tar Box Rd. The very scenic westerly parcel encompasses more than five miles of trail that takes the visitor through the diverse landscape whether on horse, bike or on foot. The easterly parcel includes almost 125 acres of forest with five miles of trails linking to the west. Some of this land also serves a utilitarian purpose. Originally some property was used as a landfill, capped many years ago and now planned to have a solar array. The Town garage is also found here. Both the east and west sections of Mobbs Farm are complemented with parking areas, a much larger one just short of the Town garage off of Browns Trace.

Over these many years, the Mobbs Farm has become a key recreational area for Jericho residents and also draws visitors from other towns. The Mobbs Committee, which has an advisory role to the Selectboard, manages this property with a keen interest in both the enjoyment factor and maintaining the scenic qualities and diverse wildlife habitats. This careful approach can be read by following this link https://www.jerichovt.gov/vertical/sites/%7B0A48C719-28BA-4BAE-B0A4-76C55C17A32C%7D/uploads/Mobbs_Farm_Final_Draft_for_Selectboard_Review_Nov2014.pdf

Continued on next page...



Continued from page 1

Great thought and public engagement has taken place to consider the most appropriate uses and balancing the recreational needs of the community while respecting the natural areas and habitats that help make this land extremely special. But is this enough?

More recently a conversation has started about permanently conserving the most important areas of Mobbs Farm. Many citizens assume that their accustomed walk will always be available.... but this land is not conserved. Future demands could alter the landscape that we cherish. Besides the outdoor exercise that Mobbs Farm provides, this property also helps to reduce air and water pollution, promotes biodiversity, helps prevent soil erosion and improves soil quality. Mobbs Farm also reduces

the negative impacts of flooding; the forest helps to sequester green house gases and also reduces fragmentation, a serious threat to many animal species. There are economic benefits too. Without demanding much in municipal services, this land draws visitors who frequent local stores and add vibrancy to our community. Mobbs Farm helps to make Jericho the very special place that it is.

The Jericho Underhill Land Trust will be discussing the permanent conservation of Mobbs Farm with the Mobbs Committee, the Jericho Conservation Commission, the Trails Committee, the Selectboard and all interested folks within the next few months. It is our hope that this land will be protected for today's enjoyment as well as tomorrow's.

JULT Land Stewardship: Turning the Tide on the Invasive Plant Tsunami

By John Koier

Driving south on VT Route 100 in the fall of 2016, I was surprised to see that both banks of the Mad River were deeply and continuously populated by large masses of Japanese knotweed. I did some research and discovered that this was a direct result of Hurricane Irene whose flood waters had spread the plant material downstream. One of the emerging concerns of land stewards everywhere has become trying to eradicate or at least control the escalating populations of invasive plant species. It is expensive, labor intensive and discouraging work.

JULT is actively involved with Japanese barberry and common buckthorn removal on our Kikas Valley Farm property just off of Skunk Hollow Road in Jericho. Last fall and again this spring we have hired a crew from the Intervale

Conservation Nursery to remove buckthorn from the wooded edges of our agricultural fields. Japanese barberry is growing and expanding over as many as 30 acres within the wooded hillside behind these same agricultural fields. We have had several volunteer work parties to work on this, but have not made much headway. We hired Will Dunkley, a certified invasive plant removal specialist, to do 40 hours of flame weeding on this property in the early spring and some volunteers will be joining in. Research done in Connecticut has revealed that barberry is a contributor to the black-legged tick population increase and this makes it even more important to control barberry density.

So, what are we looking at here from a land management perspective? Money, labor and years of constant, vigilant monitoring. Thank you for your support!

YOU ARE INVITED!

May 6th - 6:30 p.m. – Annual Meeting! Underhill Town Hall

Come join us as we *celebrate* another year of land conservation at our Annual Meeting! Refreshments will start at 6:30 p.m. with a short business meeting at 7 p.m. Our guest speaker for the evening is Margaret Fowle, a conservation biologist with Audubon, Vermont. Margaret is deeply involved in the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Program and Champlain Valley Bird Initiative. She writes, "Vermont provides critical habitat for an abundance of bird species. Some species like Bobolinks are in decline, and others like Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles are making a comeback. Come hear an informative presentation about the status of some of our critical bird species and how humans can play a role in providing the places they need to thrive." Prior to coming to Audubon in 2009, Margaret coordinated peregrine and bald eagle recovery efforts in Vermont. Margaret also works with private landowners to promote management activities that enhance grassland and shrubland habitats for priority bird species in the Champlain Valley. Margaret obtained her Master's degree in wildlife biology from the University of Vermont, where she studied the population of double-crested cormorants on Lake Champlain. Door prize! All are invited! **NOTICE! We are meeting at the Underhill Town Hall this year.**

May 9 and May 11th – Annual Bird Talk and Walk at Deborah Rawson Library and Mills Riverside Park

Who is welcoming the spring warblers who have traveled so far to be with us this summer? We are! Evergreen Erb will give us a sneak preview of the birds we expect to see at the Deborah Rawson Library at 6:30p.m., May 9th. Come join Evergreen again on Saturday at 7 a.m. for another, wonderful bird walk at Mills Riverside Park. Bring your binoculars so that you can spot the many migrant species as well as appreciate the birds that stay here all year long. Evergreen has led this walk for over 20 years!

May 18th – Annual Spring Wildflower Walk at Mills Riverside Park

Join Michele Tulis at 10:00 a.m. for her *third annual spring wildflower* walk at Mills Riverside Park. A casual pace will take us trailside to identify the early flowers that testify to spring. Michele will also inform us about the medicinal and historic uses of some of these plants. Plan to learn a lot about our native plants that have a rich history.

Please contact JULT with any questions at julandtrust@gmail.com Want to see more events? Just let us know what interests you!

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Besides working with interested landowners and the community to conserve important land, JULT owns two large properties that require care and attention. Our land stewardship director, John Koier, oversees the stewardship of the Wolfrun Natural Area (403 acres) and Kikas Valley Farm (363 acres). John's article on the removal of invasive plants points to the energy and funding necessary. JULT also has all land enrolled in state current use with active management plans. Your membership contribution helps to care for these diverse lands and we thank you. Want to know about these properties, please go to our website at www.jult.org.