

THE WREN



SUDBURY
VALLEY
TRUSTEES

June 2014

Photo: Raji Das



The Lincoln Road fields offer many scenic springtime views.

ICONIC WAYLAND LANDSCAPE PERMANENTLY PRESERVED

By Christa Collins, Director of Land Protection

Dirt roads are rare in our parts, so one can't help feeling transported to another time while standing on the rocky and rutted surface of Lincoln Road in Wayland, gazing across fields that have changed little since the days of Henry Thoreau. As evidenced by the many walkers present on a recent morning, this is one of the most peaceful and lovely lanes in town along which to amble. The views across the Lincoln Road fields are now permanently preserved.

(continued on page 4)

Trails Open on a New Conservation Restriction in Northborough

By Dan Stimson, Assistant Director of Stewardship

In a previous issue of the Wren, we told you about the conservation efforts at the Green Street Property in Northborough. SVT now holds a conservation restriction over the land, an added layer of protection over this beautiful open space cared for by the Northborough Conservation Commission.

Over the past few seasons, the Northborough Trails Committee has been hard at work to establish a trail system and a parking area there. A sturdy new footbridge crosses Howard Brook, a designated Cold-water Fishery Resource, which winds and ripples within its grassy banks. On a visit this spring, I stood on the bridge and was treated to the sight of an American kestrel, hovering as it hunted the large open field—the highlight of the visit.

We hope you'll visit these new trails too and have prepared a map to help you along your way. The map is available on our website and is an update to our Trail Guide. If you have your own copy of the Trail Guide, you will find a pocket at the back of the book where you can store updates. Download your copy at svtweb.org/TrailGuide.



Photo: Bill Shelley

A sturdy new footbridge at Northborough's Green Street property beckons visitors across Howard Brook.

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NOTES FROM LISA

When I was 15 years old, I landed my first job in conservation: working on a trail crew for the US Forest Service's Youth Conservation Corps in Utah. The job changed my life. I learned the importance of hard work and enjoyed the satisfaction of a job well done. I made some life-long friendships with my 10 crewmates. I had the privilege of taking care of some of our country's most beautiful landscapes. Most important, I found my life's calling: to care for natural areas – for wildlife, and, for people.

For over 10 years, SVT has been working with local youth who, like me so many years ago, are experiencing what it means to truly work for our natural areas. Over the years, 57 Eagle Scouts have carried out much-needed trail projects, and every year, our stewardship staff works with groups from throughout the region on community service and conservation projects at SVT properties. This spring, Dan Stimson, SVT's Assistant Director of Stewardship, worked with a group of students from Wayland High School to repair a foot bridge at Greenways Conservation Area, and a group of 17 from Acton-Boxborough Regional High School's senior class worked to remove highly invasive garlic mustard and buckthorn at Wolbach Farm, proving the old saying that many hands can make light work (see photos on page 5).

I am delighted that SVT can offer today's youth a chance to work for conservation and perhaps enjoy some of what I experienced when I was first testing out job possibilities. And, I am grateful for the good work that they do. Who knows, with help from our staff's good leadership, perhaps we inspired a future Executive Director of SVT!

For more information about SVT's Youth Conservation Stewards Program, please visit <http://www.sudburyvalleytrustees.org/youth-conservation-stewards>.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa".

Lisa Vernegaard
Executive Director

SVT's Talented Photographers

In much of the work SVT does, pictures tell the story: scenic lands, abundant wildlife, dedicated people supporting a cause for which they care deeply.

SVT is fortunate to have an amazing array of photographers among its supporters. We recently put out a call

looking for volunteers we could contact whenever there was a need for striking or emblematic photos. Five talented individuals expressed their willingness to head out into the fields, as schedules allowed, to help capture these scenes. You'll be seeing their work in both our print and electronic publications. Additionally, these photos will be used as we go out to the public to tell the SVT story or before boards and agencies to seek support for upcoming projects.

Thank you to volunteers Raj Das, Bill Shelley, Terri Ackerman, Stephen Gabeler, and Sandy Gotlib- and please note Raj's and Bill's photos which appear in this edition of *The Wren*.



Photo: Bill Shelley

HOW CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS CAN ENCOURAGE FARMLAND ACQUISITION

Laura Mattei, Director of Stewardship

SVT works to conserve land and protect wildlife habitat. As land prices in our watershed spike and local economies become increasingly attractive, SVT has been working to protect and encourage working lands through conservation restrictions (CRs). SVT currently owns 63 CRs, of which 18 are working lands with active agriculture or forestry activities. Many of our prospective projects target the protection of working farm landscapes.

Eric Preusse had always wanted to own a farm. When he was a boy growing up on a small lot in Westborough, his father nurtured gardens and a small orchard, and Eric had his own garden plot. After sending their own children off to college, Eric and his wife Peggy sought out a property where Eric could realize his dream of starting a small winery.

Eric contacted Fran Zarette about his conserved land in Shrewsbury, over which SVT holds a CR. As a conservation restriction limits or eliminates the development potential of a piece of property, it reduces the fair market value and can make it significantly more affordable for a farmer like Eric. While serving to protect the pastoral landscape, this CR limits building to two houses and two farm outbuildings. The CR allows for a broad range of agricultural and forestry activities, which provides Eric the ability to take full advantage of his creative farming spirit.



Eric Preusse, happily realizing his boyhood dream of owning a farm

Eric taught himself how to grow grapes and make wine primarily by reading. He visited other wineries and watched YouTube videos to enhance his learning. Eric shares the winemaker's adage: "It takes a lot of beer to make wine." (Eric does make beer while he is waiting for his grapes to ripen and his wine to age.) So far, he has planted two acres with nine varieties of grapes. It takes three years to achieve harvestable grapes after the initial planting. While waiting for his vineyard to reach full maturity, Eric has been purchasing a large portion of grapes from other growers. Even when mature, Eric plans to continue leveraging other growers to augment his own grape production.



Broken Creek Vineyard

Eric's passion for harvesting nature's bounty seems inexhaustible. He has planted a small orchard that includes apples, peaches, pears, and cherries. He plans to sell hard cider and wine made from his own raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries. He has established a small Shitake mushroom "factory" on red maple logs. For personal consumption, he has tapped red maple trees on his property to produce maple syrup (one gallon a year). In the future, he intends to start an apiary to sell honey and make mead. Eric envisions offering winery tours that will allow visitors to experience fruit and wine first hand, first tasting the berries and then sipping the wine. Visitors will learn about the growing operation and enjoy the scenic beauty.

This is a family business. Eric's wife and children are an integral part of the success. Peggy has started her own vegetable gardens. Eric's sons, Andrew and Ben, both share their father's passion and enjoy working at the farm on weekends. Andrew has expressed a strong interest in taking over the farm when his dad is ready to sell. Eric's daughter, Catherine, also helps out. Although she is not too fond of getting her hands dirty, she provides marketing expertise to promote the vineyard through social media.



Eric tending to vineyards that can finally be harvested this fall after three years of cultivation

Eric's hope is to retire from a full time job in a few years to spend all his time working the land and sharing his property with visitors to his vineyard and winery. According to Eric, "without the opportunity to acquire a parcel of land operating under a CR, none of this ever would have been possible." Eric plans to open the Broken Creek Vineyard this fall. He invites us all to visit!

Jerry Heller: A Commitment to Conservation, Collaboration and Community

Nick Olson, AmeriCorps Member

Conservation, Collaboration, and Community stand as the pillars supporting SVT's mission to protect land and wildlife habitat for today and future generations. Lose focus of one, and the effort teeters, but balance each of these three "Cs," and a recipe for success endures. It is, thus, with much gratitude that we honor the work of conservation volunteer Jerry Heller who firmly embodies these principles.

After Massachusetts passed the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2000, Jerry wasted no time working to get CPA adopted in Wayland, which voters quickly approved in 2001. Thirteen years and countless volunteer hours later, Jerry is about to step down from his role as Chairman of the Wayland Community Preservation Committee (CPC). In his departure, he leaves an indelible buffet of successes.

Conservation: With a long list of prior achievements in both historic preservation and affordable housing, Jerry's time with the CPC is culminating in the conservation of over 30 acres of open space with the near completion of two projects—the Lincoln Road fields and a second property currently in progress. The two properties link and expand upon hundreds of acres of open space that connect Wayland, Lincoln, and Weston, increasing both wildlife habitat and passive recreational opportunities. It is Jerry's hope that efforts to preserve the rural nature of the Wayland community will inspire others to follow suit, electing to conserve additional large tracts of open space.

Collaboration: A conversation with Jerry inescapably turns to his partners. He is quick to point out that conservation is a three-legged stool, often comprised of the landowner, Sudbury Valley Trustees, and the town of Wayland. Together, their professional experience, familiarity with the community, and intimacy with the land and its history form a triad that has proven fruitful over the past 13 years. In fact, every proposal the Community Preservation Committee has brought before Town Meeting since 2001 has passed—a success driven by collaboration.

Community: Wayland is characterized by sweeping vistas of fields, forests, and rivers. It is a community where one is never far from woods waiting to be explored, a winter pond ready to be skated upon, or a burgeoning hayfield reminding us of a past and future tied to productive lands. It is this convergence of scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and the bounty of the lands that bonds people like Jerry with those at SVT, encouraging conservation as an important public interest and defining a community for today and the future.

With this in mind, we offer best wishes to Jerry Heller as he steps down from his post on the Community Preservation Committee. We thank him for his time, expertise, and friendship throughout the last decade and a half and look forward to the future with optimism due to the successful precedent of Conservation, Collaboration, and Community he leaves in his wake.

ICONIC WAYLAND LANDSCAPE PERMANENTLY PRESERVED

(continued from page 1)

These 22.6 acres of hayfield and wet meadow had been subject to an unusual, termed conservation restriction (CR) that SVT held for 30 years until it expired in 2007. Now, thanks to Community Preservation Funds and the support of Wayland voters, protection of the property has been made permanent with the purchase of a conservation restriction for \$2.4 million, approved at last November's Special Town Meeting. The effort, which was finalized this spring, was led by Wayland Community Preservation Committee Chair Jerry Heller with assistance provided by SVT's land protection staff.

The land will remain in private ownership and may be farmed. Public access is allowed on designated trails, which connect to an extensive trail system that starts at SVT's adjacent Hazel Brook Reservation and continues west into the Weston Town Forest. Another block of preserved land extends to the north and east, all the way to Drumlin Farm in Lincoln, making the Lincoln Road fields part of a complex of conservation lands that includes over 200 acres.



Photo: Raj Das



Photo: Raj Das

Fields, ponds, and vistas of surrounding hills grace this Lincoln Road property.

SVT Youth Conservation Stewards Lend Helping Hands to Local Conservation



Top left: The Knox Trail Council National Eagle Scout Association Committee, pictured here with SVT Volunteer Preserve Steward Bill Fadden, volunteered for a service day at SVT's Hop Brook Natural Area in Framingham. The group repaired sink holes along the trail, cleaned out a culvert along Hop Brook, and trimmed the full length of the trail. Top right: Graduating seniors from Acton-Boxborough Regional High School spent a morning at Wolbach Farm sprucing up the grounds and removing invasive species. Bottom: Wayland High School students helped out at Greenways Conservation Area during their 2nd Annual Service Day in April. The group repaired a long bridge connecting the north and south trail sections.

TRANSITIONS

Susan Crane has left the position of Land Protection Specialist to concentrate on her environmental law practice. Susan's long involvement with SVT dates to the mid-1990s when she first assisted SVT with pro bono legal assistance. She was a longstanding member of the Board of Directors and the Stewardship Committee before serving on SVT's Land Protection Committee and ultimately joining the Land Protection team in 2009. Susan was thrilled when she was asked to join the staff where she could turn her longtime interest into hands-on land protection work. To all who know Susan, there is no doubt that her heartfelt commitment to conservation and the environment will strongly influence her future endeavors.

Ashley Davies, who is no stranger around SVT's offices, serving first as a two-year AmeriCorps volunteer and then as a part-time Project Coordinator for the Tri-Town Landscape Protection Partnership, has joined SVT's staff full time as a Land Protection Specialist.

Ellen Byrne recently stepped down from the position of SVT Business Manager. For eight years, Ellen has skillfully kept our financial house in order. Her patience and good cheer will be missed. Short term, Ellen is concentrating on hobbies and travelling, but she promises to keep SVT in her volunteer future.



SVT is excited to welcome **Kate Tyrrell** as SVT's new Business Manager. Her strong financial background and quick study have already made her a valued contributor to operations. Kate, a Massachusetts native, recently moved back to this area after spending 12 years in California. She enjoys hiking, gardening, and the outdoors and is thrilled to use her skills in an area of personal interest.

Special Cheers to Longtime Benefit Chair Iryna Priester

SVT is sincerely grateful to Iryna Priester, whose skillful and enthusiastic leadership has assured the success of the annual benefit since its inception in 1993. After a long reign, Iryna will be stepping aside as Benefit Chair, believing this annual event will only improve under new leadership.

Each year's benefit has evolved around a unique nature-based theme that provided the inspirational backdrop for decorations, food, attire, and auction items. Although somehow appearing seamless on the big night, the planning and logistics require tremendous attention to detail. Asked if she can single out a favorite year, Iryna jokingly replies that "each year is the best... until the following year replaces it." What she most enjoys is seeing certain attendees, often quite reserved, arrive creatively—and perhaps a little zany—attired. "It's fun to watch people let down their guard and enjoy the night."



A family affair! Iryna with daughter Anya, who often lends assistance.

Although this evening has evolved into SVT's premier fundraiser, Iryna has been lending recent thoughts to other events that might appeal to those preferring alternative opportunities to come together and support SVT in fun and informative ways. Stay tuned!

Iryna is quick to acknowledge the importance of the entire Benefit Committee: "There are many talented individuals, whose enthusiasm and skills make this evening the success it is." She believes the benefit provides a fun way to interact with our membership

and enlist the support of a wider community. "I don't think of this evening as just a fundraiser for SVT; equally important, I believe it is a friend raiser."

Come September, as the planning for the next annual benefit begins again, Iryna's lively presence surely will be missed but her guidance and leadership leave a strong foundation for ongoing success.

P.S. Please don't forget to mark February 28, 2015 on your calendars for next year's annual benefit!

THREE CHEERS! *To the following individuals and businesses:*

Sue Ingalls, Wildlife Technician, Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, for leading a presentation called "The Bobcat in Massachusetts"

Kaat Vander Straeten, Local beekeeper and founder of Wayland BEElieve, for providing the movie *More Than Honey* and for hosting a discussion after the film

Michele Grzenda, Weston Conservation Agent, for leading two woodcock walks at Greenways Conservation Area

Libby Stockwell Deegear, AMC's Youth and Family Outdoor Community Coordinator, for leading a letterboxing program at Wolbach Farm

Bill Fadden and **George Harrington** for helping to design the route of SVT's National Trails Day Trail-a-Thon

The **Framingham Quaker Friends Meetinghouse** for agreeing to host SVT's Trail-a-Thon

Susan Litowitz for her assistance with SVT's Spring Appeal

Lauren Kaplan, Gretchen Sterling, Joan Pinkul, Judy Eneguess, Maggie Kelber, Barbara Earley, and Donna Appel for their regular office assistance

Andrew Ashley and his dad **David Ashley** for leading the effort to create a video for SVT's Tri-Town project

Bob Glover, Emmy-Award winning producer with 30 years of experience in broadcasting, marketing, and managing nonprofits, for consulting with SVT about making a video

Terri Ackerman, Raj Das, Sandy Gotlib, Bill Shelley, and Stephen Gabeler for offering and providing photographs of SVT's reservations and land projects

SPECIAL THANKS

to the following funders and sponsors for their recent generous support of our work:

The GENZYME CORPORATION for its continued support of SVT through corporate giving and the hosting of an employee work day

SVT CELEBRATES 20TH ANNUAL BENEFIT AT THE "BUTTERFLY FLING"

SVT supporters came together in March for a lively and colorful celebration.
Thank you to everyone whose contributions resulted in a most successful evening.
Special thanks go to all our business supporters for their generous auction donations.
Please remember to show your appreciation when deciding where to shop!

80 Thoreau, Concord
Amy Beckett/ Back in Balance
Ashley Food Company
ATA Cycle, Concord
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Bertucci's, Wayland
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Bullfinchs Restaurant, Sudbury
Cambridge Trust Company
Concord Cheese Shop
Dr. Bradley Weiss, Natick
Droll Yankee
Facilitations, Acton
Fish Restaurant & Wine Bar,
Marlborough
Florentine Frames
Frozen Yogurt Innovations (FYI),
Wayland
Haddad Hakansson, LLC, Belmont
Helen's Restaurant, Concord
Hill Jewelers, Sudbury
Jane Polley / The Longfellow Club
Julie's Place, Acton
Karma Coffee, Sudbury
Lauren Craig Salon, Wayland
Legal Sea Foods
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Mainstone Farm, Wayland
Masterworx of Hair Design,
Weston



Susan Crane and Mark Roberts sporting their butterfly finery!

Mattei Galleria, Brookline
Nashoba Brook Bakery, Concord
Nashoba Valley Winery
New England Aquarium
Northborough EMS
Out of Asia
Plimoth Plantation

Post Road Liquors, Wayland
Prime 131 Grill, Wayland
Rail Trail Flatbread Company,
Hudson
Ray & Sons Cyclery, Maynard
Russells Garden Center, Wayland
Saharnaz Rezanian Acupuncture
Salon D'Elegance, Wayland
Sandy Burr Country Club
Sheraton Framingham Hotel
Soul of India, Sudbury
Spooniques, Stoughton
Susan Foster / Art Inspired Jewelry and
Artistic Triumphs
Sylvia Greene / Passion to Move
Taylor Rental, Sudbury
The Butterfly Place
The Center for Arts Natick (TCAN)
The Parthenon Group
The Trustees of Reservations
Toyota of Littleton
Wayside Inn
Wegman's, Northborough
Whole Food Markets,
Framingham
Whole Food Markets, Wayland
Wild Birds Unlimited, Sudbury
Wildwood, Marlborough
Winston Flowers of Concord



Molly Beard and Linda Wobler examine the many auction offerings.

Thank you to our dedicated Benefit Committee whose hard work, patience,
and good humor is invaluable in the planning and execution of this event.

Donna Appel Andi Jenny Iryna Priestler Gretchen Sterling Sonja Strong

And, a hearty thanks to Susan Litowitz for her creative graphic design assistance!

Volunteers:

Kelley Cronin MacKenzie Monserez Karen Krowne
Cass Walker Ben Davies Cindy Lombardo



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SVT and the city of Marlborough completed a successful burn at the Desert Natural Area/Memorial Forest on May 7, 2014. MassWildlife and National Wildlife Refuge staff provided invaluable support in bringing the first phase of this project to completion.

The project goal is to restore pitch pine-scrub oak barrens and the rare and declining species of wildlife that depend upon this habitat. Wildlife that will benefit include whip-poor-will, Eastern towhee, prairie warbler, brown thrasher, frosted elfin and barrens buckmoth, among others. For more information, please visit our webpage: www.svtweb.org/DesertNaturalArea.