

Watershed News

THE PISCATAQUOG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

286-Acre Farm Protected in Lyndeborough

by Margaret Watkins

Pam and Tom Grossman relax on one of the old stone walls that abound on their property. (Photo: Margaret Watkins)

Tom and Pam Grossman knew exactly what they were looking for in a horse farm and exactly what they wanted to avoid two years ago when they were exploring options.

"We moved to Lyndeborough from Westchester County, New York," explains Tom, "where in 14 years we saw the area go from rural countryside to suburbia. When we moved to Westchester County, there were maybe 10 people at the train station commuting with me into the city. When we left, there were 200. It was a short time span, and all the predictions that development would help the tax base were wrong. School and property taxes exploded with development." The Grossmans conserved their Westchester farm before moving, a decision that makes Pam feel "really good about the sale of that property."

The Grossmans' 286-acre farm in Lyndeborough lies at the end of a dead-end road. Its size, relative isolation, and rocky, forested hillsides infuse it with an almost wilderness quality, despite its agrarian history. Elevations range from 760 to 1210 feet. Everywhere, the land was once farmed, as evidenced by patches of field juniper and stone walls

running at gravity-defying angles. Extensive low-bush blueberries offer lingering evidence of a 19th century crop that was shipped from Lyndeborough by rail to urban areas. Today, myriad wildlife, including moose, fox, weasel, bear, snowshoe hare, grouse, and fisher, use the property, which is now largely forested. Along the frontage at Mountain Road is a large, abandoned beaver flowage on Cold Brook.

The property abuts 337 acres of Forest Society land to the west and is near a large block of protected land to the southeast. From one especially scenic knoll, you can see Joe English Hill in New Boston, the Uncanoonucs in Goffstown, and Weare's Mount Wallingford, Mount Dearborn, and Mount William.

Within a few months of purchasing their land, the Grossmans contacted the Lyndeborough Land Preservation Society to share their desire to conserve

it. In December 2006, PWA closed on a conservation easement donated by the Grossmans to conserve all but 16 acres around the residential and farm buildings.

The Grossmans are recreating a pasture on the easement property. In this and other ways the easement provides Pam the opportunities she needs to continue her championship show jumping work with her exquisitely beautiful horses.

Bringing his Westchester County experience again to play, Tom is quick to advocate, "There should be more of a sense of urgency here in Lyndeborough. The opportunity to protect open space could be gone in a few years."

The Grossmans' property is being conserved as part of the Headwaters Project-I, a partnership of PWA, Francetown Land Trust, and other conservation organizations working together to protect 1000 acres in relatively large blocks by building on and connecting existing conservation properties. The Grossmans' gift brings the partnership very close to that acreage goal.



TO CONSERVE

the natural and scenic environment of the Piscataquog River Watershed communities:
Deering ~ Dunbarton ~ Francetown ~ Goffstown ~ Greenfield ~ Henniker
Lyndeborough ~ Manchester ~ Mont Vernon ~ New Boston ~ Weare

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

by Margaret Watkins

2006 was a banner year for the PWA with an all-time record of 10 land protection projects completed and 771 acres conserved during the year. 2007 is off to a great start with 79 more acres protected in the first week, for a total of 2885 acres now protected by PWA – *more than a quarter of*

these being protected in just the last year. Projects in 2006 ranged in size from the addition of two house lots nestled within the PWA's first conservation easement property in New Boston to a 286-acre property on the slopes of Piscataquog Mountain in Lyndeborough. This work took place within a broader context of conservation action throughout the Piscataquog region as landowners and community groups engaged in a variety of land conservation projects, often with PWA assistance.

Volunteers have developed trails on two of the four new properties that PWA owns outright. Visit the Burke Family Wildlife Preserve on Old Francestown Road in Deering and the Rice Natural Area on Lyndeborough Road in Lyndeborough for two thoroughly enjoyable winter walks. You'll find additional hiking opportunities in upcoming Walk in the Woods! events.

Looking ahead, 2007 promises to be another big year for watershed conservation. Special tax breaks for gifts of conservation easements are scheduled to end December 31 unless Congress acts to extend them. The climate locally is good for conservation as more and more people are appreciating how much communities benefit financially, aesthetically, and environmentally from open space. We have many great projects in the pipeline, and we are regularly fielding inquiries about new projects.

PWA's growth and achievements over the past several years are remarkable, and PWA members have played a large role in making those achievements possible. As the Board looks forward, the opportunities loom large. To take advantage of them, we at PWA need to expand our capacity to do conservation work. The Board and Development Committee, in particular, are focusing on this immediate need. If you would consider becoming more involved in PWA's work at this dynamic time, please contact John McCausland, Board President (529-4740), Jerry Shinn, Chair of the Development Committee (529-2255), or the PWA office. We'd be delighted to talk with you! We could especially use the help of someone with nonprofit, management, or fundraising experience, a media or marketing specialist, and anyone with deep roots in the community who resonates with PWA's mission.



WINTER OUTINGS

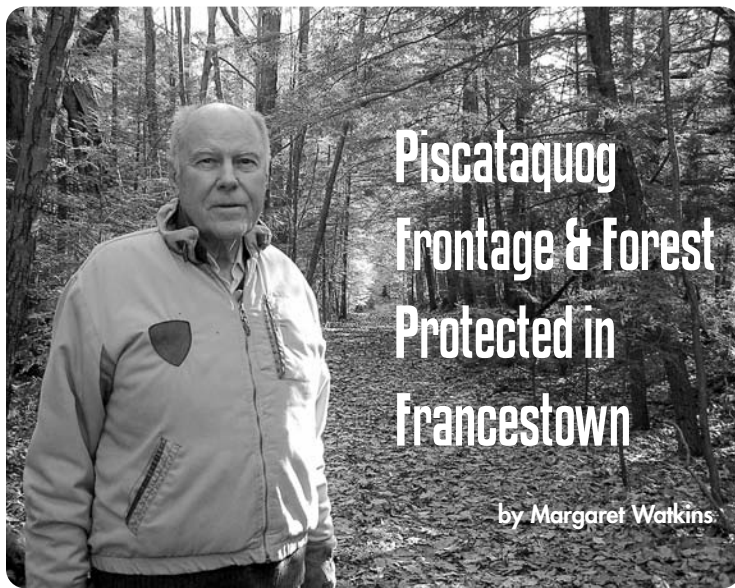
Saturday, February 10, 9:30 AM in Francestown
X-C skiing & snowshoeing along the river.

Member Ray James will guide skiers on his riverfront trail. If snow depths exceed 7-9 inches, we'll snowshoe instead. Bring a bag lunch. (To rent snowshoes, call PWA by Wednesday, February 7.)

Saturday, March 3, 9:30 AM in Dunbarton
RESCHEDULED – Winter tracking!

Learn more about winter tracking at the Kuncanowet Natural Area with Jamie Bodwell. Co-sponsored by the Dunbarton Conservation Commission.

Please, no dogs. Pre-register at 487-3331 or pwa@pwa-nh.org. Events are held regardless of weather; if hazardous road conditions prompt a cancellation, we will record a message at 487-3331.



Roger Hall pauses along the woods road that borders his newly protected land. (Photo: Pat Nelson)

When the Halls bought an old farm in Franconia in 1961, they were only the fourth family in more than 200 years to own it. The house where Roger Hall lives was built in 1771 by a Franconia selectman who fought in the Revolutionary War.

The old homestead has seen a lot of change. For one, Woodward Hill Road once ran right past the front door and down to the South Branch of the Piscataquog River. Today, the road passes at a respectable distance on its way to the “new” town center and all that remains of the old road is a woodland trail. Much of what was open farmland is now forested. The South Branch, on which Roger’s property fronts for about 1780 feet, has shifted its course over time.

“The river is such a beautiful place,” muses Roger. He sees it with the eyes of a physicist, artist, and musician.

According to biologist Dr. Barry Wicklow, “This stretch [of the river] is extraordinarily important in helping to maintain the pure water quality that is evident from the aquatic insects found here – species that occur only in highly oxygenated water and have virtually no tolerance for pollution.”

Roger recently put an easement on two parcels of his land: 23 acres along the river, protecting all the frontage, and 25 acres of forested land along County Road South. The latter parcel connects with Rand Brook Forest and other protected lands that together create a block of more than 1000 acres of conserved land.

Roger decided to protect his land after talking with Barry about various conservation options. He agreed to sell a conservation easement for less than market value and to accept payments over time, reducing the funds needed to be raised up front. Because of the significance of the river frontage and connectivity to other conservation lands, the Russell Piscataquog River Watershed Foundation has awarded PWA a grant toward the project.

Roger’s three children, Sarah, Lyman, and Katharine, support his decision. “I’m so grateful you all are doing this, and my kids are too,” said Roger. “They didn’t want to see the land built up either.”

The project’s significance goes beyond protecting open space as such. “You don’t hear much about this,” says Dr. Wicklow, “but freshwater biodiversity is at much greater risk than any terrestrial species. Fresh water, including the water in icecaps, makes up only 0.01% of the world’s water; it’s an incredibly valuable natural resource. The river also serves as a wildlife corridor, and the undeveloped land along it is critical to wildlife.”

The fortunate coming together of Roger’s interest in maintaining his land as open space and the ongoing, collaborative Headwaters Project-I campaign in Franconia, Lyndeborough, and Greenfield made this project possible.



Making a Saw-Whet Owl Box

The smallest owl in New Hampshire, the saw-whet, lives in dense conifers or woods near a bog. Owl mating season starts in late winter. You can make a saw-whet nesting box from an 8-foot 1x8” cedar board. A simple design is online at:

<http://www.pacifier.com/~mpatters/bird/nestbox.html>

Drill some holes in the bottom and line the floor with wood shavings. Mount your box at least 12’ off the ground. To discourage predators, put at least 6’ of flashing below the box. If fisher inhabit your woods, place the box away from other trees that could provide top-down access.



Late Winter Keeping Track Dates



**Late winter is a great time for tracking.
Novices are always welcome.
Join us!**

Sunday, March 4 – Greenfield

Call Gordon at 487-2994

Sunday, March 11 – Lyndeborough

Call Gordon at 487-2994

Saturday, March 17 – New Boston

Call Ken at 487-5114

Sunday, March 18 – Frankestown

Call Margaret at 774-7120

Dates are subject to change. Call leaders to confirm.

PWA thanks the following members for their support!

Welcome to Our New Members! (as of January 1st)

Thomas & Kay Anderson**	Frankestown
James Brown	Weare
Robert & Alyssa Brust*	Weare
Ruth T. Carney & Joan W. Carney	N. Falmouth, MA
Arlon Chaffee*	Newmarket
Jonathan Dowst & Judith Lamont	Weare
Kate Doyle*	Weare
Anthony Eberhardt	New Boston
Forrest Esenwine	Weare
Judith & John Foss	Weare
Edmund & Ann Frost	Frankestown
David Getzin	Weare
George Goodloe	Nashua
Allyson & Blair Gourley	Weare
Katharine Hall	Carmel, NY
Kathie James & Robert Stencavage*	Frankestown
Charles F. Leahy Jr.	Newmarket
Stu & Ruth Lewin*	New Boston
George & Margaret Malette	Weare
Michael & Monique Manna	Weare
Oliver Mutch	Ashby, MA
Jim Orr	Peterborough
Will & Linda Ottery	Weare
Denise Rico*	Henniker
William R. Stafford*	Weare
Helen Van Ham	Lyndeborough
Mario & Katherine Vanini	Londonderry

Member Renewals (as of January 1st)

Brewster & Elizabeth Ames	Frankestown	Lorraine Miller	New Boston
Abigail & Frances Arnold	Frankestown	Carol Hall & David Moffat	Goffstown
Rev. Florent Bilodeau	Manchester	Vera Martin	Weare
Natale Brown*	Concord	Richard & Patricia Moore*	Auburn
Jesse Butler	Thunderbolt, GA	Robert & Margorie Moreau	New Boston
Mary Clapp	Goffstown	Susanna & James Newson*	Contoocook
Mary Ellen & Andre Compagna**	New Boston	Donald Normandeau**	Goffstown
Harriet T. Cope*	Frankestown	Jon Nute	Canterbury
Michael & Helen Dutton***	Weare	Dorthea O'Neil	Weare
William G Ford	Hooksett	Elizabeth Paynter*	Weston, MA
Carolyn Gagnon	Goffstown	Barbara Perkins	Goffstown
Frank & Joan Hanchett	Frankestown	Hannah Proctor*	Frankestown
Ben & Robin Haubrich*	Frankestown	James & Jane Raymond**	Goffstown
Taisto & Sirkka Holm	Frankestown	Dennis Roberts	Weare
Debra & Stephen Ives*	New Boston	Judith Russell**	Goffstown
Patricia Jennings	New Boston	Beth Salerno & Tod Ramseyer*	Weare
John Kanter & Lori Sommer*	Hopkinton	Karen Roach**	Manchester
Patricia & Joseph Kayal	Huntington Station, NY	James Scott & Julie Kirklin*	New Boston
Jerry & Christine King	Weare	John & Linda Seager**	Hollis
Peter Kostecki	Frankestown	Donna & Eric Seidel	New Boston
Lake Horace Landowners Corp**	Weare	Agnes Shellmer	Goffstown
Evelyn Lamson	Goffstown	Joseph & Kelley Spoerl	Goffstown
Robert A. & Lee Lecomte	Goffstown	Mica & Holly Stark	New Boston
Kirk & Judith Leoni*	Weare	Brett & Kristin St.Clair*	Dunbarton
Paul Livingston	Millbrae, CA	Ronald Tams	New Boston
David Loranger	Goffstown	O.Alan Thulander**	Frankestown
Dwight & Heather Lovejoy**	New Boston	Jean Walker	Goffstown
		Lori & Mark Wamser	Dunbarton
		Robert & Betsy Whitman	New Boston
		Barry & Lois Wicklow*	Frankestown
		Joshua & Hollis Young	Charlestown, MA

MATCHING GIFTS

Thank you to **Michael Boyko** of Weare who doubled his gift to the PWA through a matching gift program at Verizon! Many companies offer to match employee contributions to nonprofit organizations like the PWA. Does yours?

OTHER GIFTS

Mr. & Mrs. Robert French

SPECIAL THANKS TO...

Judy Badot, Pat Jennings, Addie Ann Lambarth, Lyn Lombard, Gordon Russell, Agnes Shellmer, Holly Stark, and Barbara Thomson for help with our December mailings! We couldn't have done it without you!

Will Townsend, who helped in the PWA office for 3 hours every week through the summer and fall! We grew to depend on Will for many of our more complex computer and office challenges. Will, we can't wait to see you again in the spring!

* Contributing Member (\$50)

** Supporting Member (\$100)

*** Guardian Member (\$250+)

Help protect the places you cherish. Renew or make a gift at www.pwa-nh.org.



The Brooks children gathered recently for a family reunion on the land that is so special to them. From left: Abigail Brooks Long, Phil, Jon, and David. Missing and missed: Susan Brooks Franklin (deceased). (Photo: Pat Nelson)

When my parents, Martha and Sam Brooks, first purchased a log cabin and four acres in 1947 on a dead-end road in New Boston, I believe they subconsciously knew that they were giving our family of seven a “sense of place.” The cabin had no running water or electricity, and our family weekends and summers were a rich combination of collective responsibilities and play. Whether we were carrying water from a nearby spring, cutting and hauling firewood for the wood cookstove and fireplace, helping to build a network of trails, or hauling supplies by sled in winter, the experience enriched our love and appreciation of the “wildness” of our property and our shared time together. We children spent our time building “forts” in the woods, fishing in nearby streams, swimming at Scobie Pond, and generally

**In the end, we conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand.
We will understand only what we are taught. - Baba Dioum, Senegalese poet**

“messaging about” in the isolation of our property. Over the next ten years my parents added another 150 acres to the property.

In 1964 the log cabin was replaced by a year-round house, and 11 years later Martha and Sam sold our Manchester home and moved to New Boston full-time. Shortly after this move and eager to keep the family land in an undeveloped state, they, with the encouragement of the entire family and the PWA, put a conservation easement on the property. This conservation land initially included 78 acres of forest, 44 acres of wetland, 20 acres of wild land, and a 5-acre field. It was PWA's first easement.

Over the last 20 years, the original easement has grown. In 1989, my brother Jon donated 15 acres, and in 2000, Jon and his wife, Jami Boyle, donated an additional 20 acres for the Martha's Brook Project (named for our mother). In December 2006, all the Brooks siblings decided to donate two lots that had been set aside in the original conservation agreement as potential building lots held in common by the Brooks children.

This total easement of 180 acres is a fitting tribute to our family's love of this land and the generous and philanthropic spirit my parents instilled in us as children and shared with their friends and neighbors. My sister Abigail recently wrote, “Our family land is an album containing a flood of memories of a childhood embraced

by a rare wildness and simplicity. It holds the legacy of our parents' love and respect for the natural world as well as their commitment to

enriching the New Boston community. This gift to PWA and the community is made with our hope that others will experience and appreciate all it has to offer to the soul.”

David Brooks lives in the Mt. Washington Valley with his wife Leslie Kane where he specializes in nonprofit management. In the winter he is an avid skate skier and in summer he can be found in his gardens.

Piscataquog Watershed Loses a Friend:

Remembering Ken Marvell

Ken Marvell, one of PWA's original Board members, recently passed away. PWA Director Emeritus Robert Todd shares his thoughts on a much-loved forester who, in Bob's words, “lived lightly on the land and was a person I admired.”

If land stewards had rank, then Ken would be the chief. In my mind he was the chief. I remember that Ken was very excited about the PWA idea. The enthusiasm and knowledge he gained with a similar group inspired the PWA's first Board of Directors. His love for the forest was strong – surpassed only by the great joy he felt each time a bus full of youngsters unloaded at Sunset Tree Farm to hear him tell about the forest. As I reflect on Ken's superior example, I ponder how much grander life would be if more watershed landowners shared Ken's land ethic.

PWA gratefully acknowledges the following gifts made in Ken's memory:

The Belmore Family - Paula, David, Sam & Jack
The Manson Family - Tom, Diane, Fritz, Hunter & Rebecca
John & Linda Seager

Address Service Requested



KICK OFF THE NEW YEAR WITH THESE 2007 WALK IN THE WOODS! OUTINGS:

Saturday, February 10: X-C Skiing in Frankestown

Saturday, March 3: Tracking in Dunbarton

Details inside.

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PWA Score Card:

2006 Projects Completed: 10

Total Acres Protected: 2885



Hi-E-Nuf Farm in Goffstown, protected in 2006. (Photo: Pat Nelson)

THANK YOU
to our 2006 Annual Fund donors
for helping PWA protect more land!

We still need to raise \$4026 more by March 1
to earn a challenge grant for an additional \$5000.
Please help! Send your Annual Fund gift today!