

WE'VE GOT A PLACE FOR YOU!

Are you looking for someplace to get outside and still stay away from other people during this period of social distancing? When going outdoors is presumed one of the safe things to do outside of your home, UVLT has lots of options to get you outside! We manage trails ranging from very easy to difficult, in all parts of the Upper Valley, and we want to share them with you.

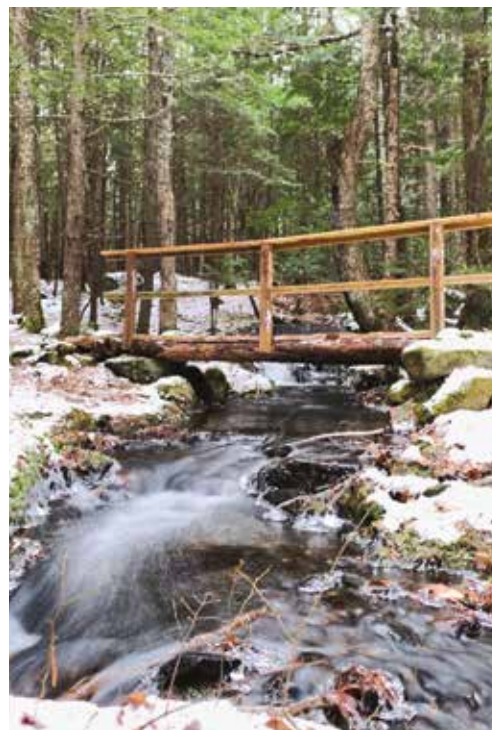
Throughout history people have relied on the serene beauty and calm of nature as an escape from their own daily lives. Now, we rely on nature more than ever as a source of solace and relaxation during this time of stress and anxiety.

Please take care of your health, the health of your neighbors, and the health of the land while you are out. Current national and state guidelines indicate that you can safely enjoy the outdoors if you maintain a distance of 6 feet or

more from other people. We welcome you on our land! And as more people seek outdoor time for recreation and relaxation, please remember to clean up after your pet, pack out anything you brought, and if the trailhead parking is full, seek another destination.

You can visit our Get Outside Public Access Trails page (<https://uvlt.org/public-access-trails>) for information and maps about all of the trails UVLT manages, which covers over 200 miles of trails. Or you can read our top recommendations post on the blog (<https://uvlt.org/2020/03/want-to-get-outside-while-social-distancing-these-are-our-top-recommendations/>).

Some of the top recommendations include the Lone Oak Trail in Bath, NH, Lake Runnemedede and Paradise Park in Windsor, VT, and The Dismal at Pressey Brook in East Hanover, NH.



Read the links in this article by Scanning the QR Code with Your Smartphone:

GET OUTSIDE PUBLIC ACCESS TRAILS PAGE:



TOP RECOMMENDATIONS BLOG POST:




UPPER VALLEY LAND TRUST

19 Buck Road
Hanover, NH 03755



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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

Alex Medicott & Kristi Medill

The Upper Valley Land Trust is known for being one of the few area land conservancies that utilize volunteers for monitoring easements. Alex Medicott and Kristi Medill are among those monitoring volunteers who became a part of the team in 2016. Alex and Kristi conserved their Piermont homestead in 2012 and later found themselves wanting to support the cause of conservation with something more. The Hewes Brook, an easement with public access, located in the forest behind Crossroads Academy in Lyme was the first property they monitored for UVLT. Since then, their volunteering has taken them to some fascinating places



Alex Medicott and Kristi Medill at their home in Piermont, NH

close to home for hiking and solitude. Every walk is notable for something exciting. The rock den with a resident porcupine, the old-growth silver maple grove by the river, the milkweed patch during monarch butterfly time, the biggest blue beech ever seen, the rock face undercut by the stream or the hilltop with a long meadow view into Vermont. They find themselves returning to these points on repeat visits to the same property. Their favorite part of volunteering is meeting the landowners and often being able to walk with them so they can showcase the hidden gems on their properties. Thank you, Alex and Kristi, for your support and dedication.

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News & Notes

UPPER VALLEY LAND TRUST

More of the Mountain

A purchase underway this spring will almost double the size of the Ely Mountain Conservation Area, extending UVLT's ownership east and north into the town of Fairlee. By late May, UVLT expects to purchase 187 acres from Peter Mans, adding the newly acquired property to the existing Conservation Area, accessed off Quinibeck Road.

Ely Mountain rises between the Connecticut River and Lake Fairlee in the heart of Thetford's largest unfragmented forest block, a region the Conservation Commission has identified as one of the town's "crown jewels." Advocates for the conservation and stewardship of this forest block include members of the Commission, scientists and wildlife experts working with the State of Vermont, and area residents desiring to protect intact areas of older forest for habitat, ecological resilience, and carbon sequestration.

State-level research and mapping confirm the habitat significance of the area around Ely Mountain. The area has been found to have above average climate-resilience. That means it's more likely to sustain plants, animals, and natural processes into the future.

UVLT's purchase will protect a large area of the intact forest and support a potential cross-river wildlife corridor extending east to the headwaters of the Mascoma River and the White Mountains. Threatened, and endangered Northern Long-eared Bats have been tracked and observed in the area. The upper reaches of the Mans property drain into two different watersheds. The expanded Ely Mountain Conservation Area will drain into four watersheds.

The soon-to-be 385-acre Ely Mountain Conservation Area is well situated to support ongoing habitat research, citizen science activities, and natural science education for youth and adults because UVLT has previously built a parking area and trailhead access, just down the road from the Ohana facility operated by the Hulbert Outdoor Center.



Learn more at: <https://uvlt.org/land-conservation/ely-mountain/>

A message from Jeanie

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

Most UVLT communications tell stories of recent transactions or focus on our upcoming outdoor activities and the places that you have helped to conserve. But this message is simple: "Thank you."

As the horrific toll of the corona pandemic has evolved over the past weeks, the woods and trails of the Upper Valley - the mud season rivulets, vernal pools, and returning birds, the first wildflowers of spring- have been a source of respite and solace for Upper Valley residents. In this moment, land and nature is probably more valued than it ever has been. Conserved lands will be an important part of our region's recovery and resilience. UVLT's supporters have made this possible. Thank you!

Like you, UVLT has made a lot of changes this spring. We're learning new ways to communicate and get our work done while keeping our staff, supporters, and volunteers safe. Much of our outdoor work is solitary and can be accomplished compliant with current public health guidance. Our office has been closed, but our staff, working from their homes, are continuing to advance UVLT's mission of land conservation, stewardship, and community service.

continued on inside

TUNBRIDGE: *A Place for Friends and Family*



Group of the Leggat family and their friends in 2001

Barbara Leggat and Joan Perera have donated 153 acres in Tunbridge, where their families enjoyed tent camping for years. UVLT will conserve the property and sell it, using the proceeds to conserve more land. Barbara describes this as a "double benefit." Below are Joan's remembrances of time in Tunbridge. Family photos have been provided by Barbara.

Father's Day Weekend in June meant a camping trip to Tunbridge, VT. Into each of our cars, we piled tents, sleeping bags, a Coleman stove, coolers, a tarp, an axe, a saw, geodetic survey maps, binoculars, and an Army bugle – used, teasingly, for morning reveille. Rain or shine, the three day weekend took place, and it was enjoyed by several families, all of whom loved the out-of-doors. This Father's Day camping tradition stretched over 40 years. In time, the children around the campfire, or in the fields, were our grandchildren; however, even when the youngest generation was absent, Tunbridge continued to be special to us and our good friends who enjoyed the pleasures of outdoor living.

From 1968 through the 70s and 80s, our land was grazed by our neighbor's dairy cows. They kept the meadows open, and from high points of land, we could see the mountains in the distance.

What was special about Tunbridge? For suburban children, it was an eye-opener to watch the cows being milked at daybreak. Waking at sunrise was special. For all of us, food tasted better when cooked outside, and we set up our field kitchen under a grove of senior Maple trees. We took long walks to distant fields identifying the familiar wild flowers along the way: Indian Paintbrush; dandelions, buttercups, daisies. Wild strawberries were abundant, and we picked them enthusiastically.

Sometimes we had six or seven families camping on the land and with lots of children in the mix, we sometimes played Capture the Flag in the big open field. There was always a birder or two among us who identified the lilting calls of the Hermit Thrush and the White-Throated Sparrow. A hike to Kibling Hill was popular, and on a clear day we could see Mt. Mansfield to the northwest.

Saturday night's campfire meant roasting marshmallows and listening to a ghost story or two. On a clear night, we could glimpse the Milky Way, find the North Star, and identify the Big and Little Dippers, among other constellations.

In Tunbridge, the pace was relaxed, the conversations were deep and unhurried, and we returned home full of good food, pure Vermont air, and good friendships. Each year, we took a tangible bit of Vermont back home with us in the form of a gallon of Tunbridge maple syrup, a gift from our neighbor in thanks for tapping our maple trees and for grazing his cows on our land - a winning arrangement for all!

In recent years, we've been thinking about the future of our land in Tunbridge. Conserving it was appealing to us. We heard about the Upper Valley Land Trust, and when we met with President Jeanie McIntyre, we were inspired by the mission of UVLT. The commitment to preserving natural habitats and to conserving land for human enjoyment was our hope for the land that was special to us for 52 years.



The Leggat family on their first camping trip to Tunbridge, sitting on the stone wall which is a boundary line of the land (1971)



Joan with her daughter and granddaughters in front of her tent (2007)

UVLT Garden *GROWS*

The food pantry garden at UVLT's Brookmead Conservation Area on Turnpike Road in Norwich is growing! After a successful 2019 season, we'd planned to double the size of the garden. However, in light of the skyrocketing need for food assistance due to Covid-19, UVLT has committed to planting the entire field — 3/4 of an acre — and producing at least 6 times as many vegetables this year.

The Brookmead food pantry garden puts UVLT-owned conservation land in service to community members in need. Produce grown there is donated to Willing Hands and distributed throughout the region. The garden at Brookmead advances UVLT's commitment that land conservation makes our communities more resilient, healthy, and sustainable for all.

Adaptation and Resilience *continued from front*

Some of our conservation transactions have been affected by the closure of Town Offices. In Vermont, title research and review of deeds usually happens in visits to town vaults where registries are maintained. As this newsletter goes to print, we're expecting that the Governor may soon provide guidance as to how these local functions can be carried out safely.

The gift of land in Tunbridge, described in this newsletter, was touched by the virus in multiple ways. Originally, I had planned to drive to Massachusetts in early March to sign papers and spend a morning with the donors, Joan and Barbara. We changed the plan as we learned more about social distancing advice, deciding that it would be wiser to exchange papers by mail. But then a Trustee for one of the donors returned from travelling in Europe and found himself quarantined, unable to sign in front of a notary. By the end of March, when he was released (he was healthy throughout), the Tunbridge Town Office was closed and title updates were impossible. So, though the gift has been made, the deeds may not be recorded until it is safe to do so. Similar constraints affect the conservation of the Richardson Sugarbush in Hartland and the purchase of land to expand the Ely Mountain Conservation Area in Thetford and Fairlee.

UVLT has been moving quickly to put our conserved lands in the service of the whole community, expanding our food

In 2019, we "tested the waters." We got a bit of a late start, as we tilled and fertilized a portion of a small meadow previously used for hay. Our first garden was 1/8 of an acre of winter storage crops that Willing Hands told us were most needed. It produced about a half ton of vegetables and was a big success!

2020 will see an enormous leap in production for UVLT staff but we are ready to take on the challenge and contribute what we can, using our land to benefit those who need it most. We have secured seeds to plant the entire 3/4 of an acre, starting earlier and planting a wider variety. Tilling and new fencing is underway as this newsletter goes to press. Again this year, Willing Hands is advising us what to plant: peas, carrots, radishes, onions, potatoes, winter squash, kale and a few other crops.

pantry garden and firewood fuel assistance programs. At our trailhead kiosks, you'll see new signs requesting hikers to maintain social distancing, leash their dogs, and keep the trails safe and clean. With large group workdays out of the question, our volunteer program has adapted to support individuals and families who have stepped up to work independently.

Amid all the challenges and changes, **please take care of yourself and be safe.** We are in this for the long haul. We all need each other.

And, once again, **thank you.** You have helped create a base of conserved land that can feed people and heat their homes. You've supported trails and protected natural areas that are helping families cope every day. We realize that many of our supporters face hardships that prevent ongoing charitable contributions at this time. But, if you are able, I hope you will support our work by making a donation. We need and value your help.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns – though social isolation may be the practice of our times, we are still working for you and with you to conserve and care for the land that sustains us all.

With best wishes and much gratitude,



The conservation of the Richardson Sugarbush in Hartland is expected to be completed later this spring, after a pause while title work in Vermont Town Offices was impacted by public health advisories and Executive Orders.

We have received a tremendous outpouring of support from the community. When the call for volunteers was sent out to area residents over 40 people offered to help. Donations of needed materials and tools, like wheelbarrows, were made, and recently when UVLT asked if people could donate a part of their rhubarb plants to create a permanent perennial plot more than a dozen people offered.

Together with Willing Hands, we are developing the protocols for safe staff and volunteer work in our garden this spring. We expect these will evolve with public health guidance over the course of the summer. Thank you to all who are putting hands on the land to grow food and help address hunger in our communities.

Announcing THE SWAN BEDROCK SOCIETY

In January, UVLT Trustee, June Hemberger, and former Board Chair, Rick Roesch began an initiative to put the spotlight on the importance of planned gifts. "Just as UVLT has protected land forever, we want to protect the UVLT forever, to ensure that it continues to conserve working farms, forested ridges, wildlife habitat, water resources, trails and scenic landscapes. That is why we have made it a beneficiary in our estate plans," they wrote.

Over the past several months, June and Rick have been speaking with UVLT supporters about simple steps that will create a strong foundation for UVLT's future. When the initiative began, June and Rick were among the two dozen supporters who had included UVLT in their estate plans. Their goal is to double the number.

The Swan Bedrock Society recognizes individuals who plan to make a future gift to UVLT. This society is named in memory of Freda and Hank Swan, early and constant supporters of UVLT, who made major contributions through their estate. In the words of June and Rick, "Years from now our land trust will still be working to conserve and protect land in our community, thanks in part to the funding these gifts will provide."

Gift planning is as easy as adding a beneficiary designation on an IRA or life insurance policy or including a provision in a will or arranging a life income gift. If you've made plans to benefit UVLT or if you would like to learn more about how your plans can benefit UVLT, please contact June Hemberger, 802-578-9948 or Jeanie McIntyre, jeanie.mcintyre@uvlt.org. Please help ensure UVLT's future by joining the Swan Bedrock Society!

MEMBERS OF THE SWAN BEDROCK SOCIETY

We would like to thank all those who have pledged or made planned gifts to UVLT as of April 2020

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|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <i>Jim & Joan Ashley</i> | <i>Kurt Gotthardt</i> | <i>J. Michael McGean</i> | <i>Elisabeth Russell</i> |
| <i>Charles & Lynn Bohi</i> | <i>Marion Weathers Grassi</i> | <i>Jeanie McIntyre</i> | <i>Rika & Carl W. Schmidt</i> |
| <i>Roald & Lois E. Cann</i> | <i>Justin Gullotta</i> | <i>Christopher Milanese</i> | <i>Don & Irmie Snowden</i> |
| <i>Lisa Cashdan & Peter Stein</i> | <i>Marion McCollom Hampton</i> | <i>E.J. Moorhead</i> | <i>Elizabeth & Edmund Speer</i> |
| <i>Robert W. Christy</i> | <i>June Hemberger</i> | <i>Chris & Nancy Nesbitt</i> | <i>David & Anne Stephens</i> |
| <i>Patricia Ayres Crawford</i> | <i>Bill & Sylvia Hill</i> | <i>Anne Peyton</i> | <i>Edward & Virginia Taylor</i> |
| <i>James & Deborah Crowell</i> | <i>Carol Langstaff</i> | <i>David & Sarah Drew Reeves</i> | <i>Genevieve Williamson</i> |
| <i>Marilyse de Boissezon</i> | <i>Carola Lea</i> | <i>Patricia Richardson</i> | <i>Anonymous (12)</i> |
| <i>Blynn Garnett</i> | <i>Doug & Jean Loudon</i> | <i>Lorrin Riggs</i> | |
| <i>John & Pam Gerstmayr</i> | <i>Peter Martin & Lynn Freeman</i> | <i>Rick & Linda Roesch</i> | <i>Italics indicate gifts complete.</i> |

The newly tilled and expanded Brookmead Food Pantry Garden.

