



# News & Notes

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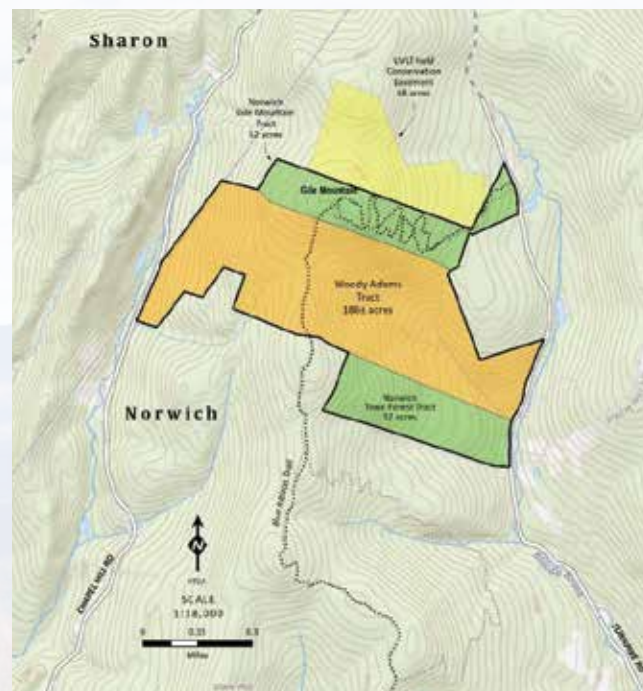
"Good News" continued from front...

The two Town-owned properties and existing trails will be conserved as well — 290 acres all together.

And what special land this is! Centrally located in a 9,500-acre forest block, the high elevation forest is riddled with vernal pools and seeps. Seasonal and perennial streams feed two watersheds, draining the slopes to Blood Brook and Mitchell Brook. The whole area is considered a "Priority Interior Forest Block" and a "Highest Priority Connectivity Block" by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. This land is crucially important in supporting natural communities' adaptation to climate change and limiting downstream impacts of catastrophic weather events.

Running south from the Gile Mountain summit, through the Adams property toward the village of Norwich, is the "Blue Ribbon Trail." When the Adams property was listed for sale, there was concern that the forest might be fragmented and the trail experience degraded. But Tony Adams has agreed to sell the property for less than 60% of its appraised value in order to memorialize his father's love of the outdoors.

This uncommon legacy, together with the conservation of the Town-owned properties and the significant ecological qualities create a rare and urgent opportunity. UVLT and the Norwich Conservation Commission have been awarded a \$125,000 grant from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and an appropriation from the Norwich Conservation Fund. We are raising funds through a \$65,000 local campaign to complete the conservation of the three parcels.



UPPER VALLEY  
LAND TRUST

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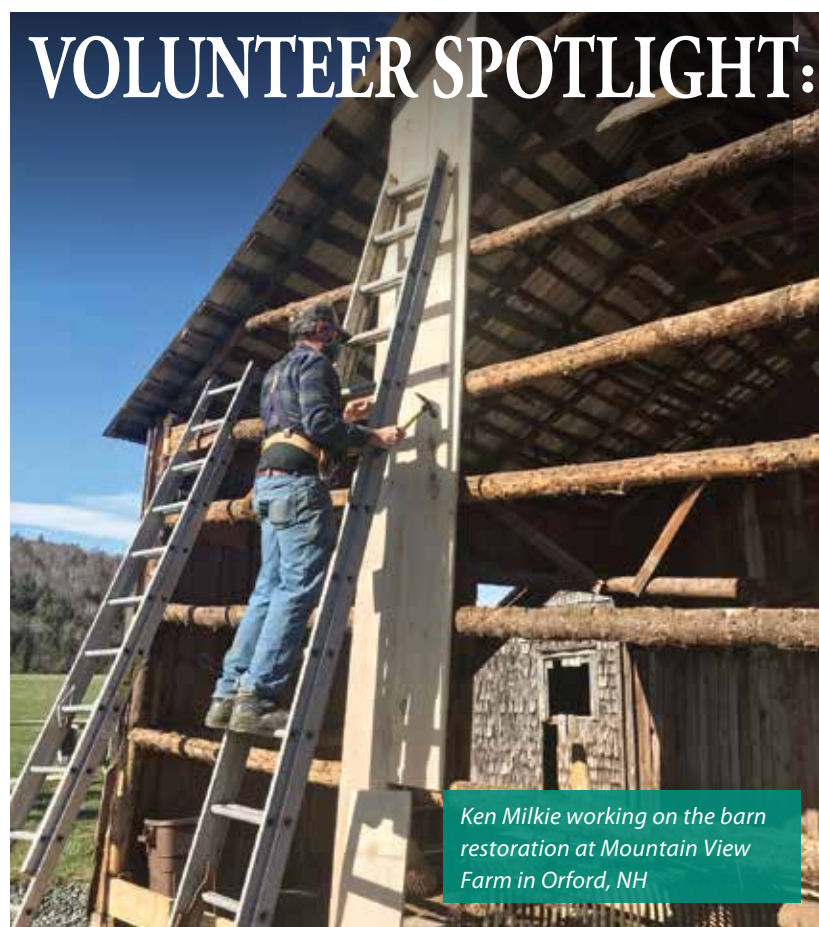
## Gile Ridge Conservation Resources

- Water quality of streams, seeps, and vernal pools in two watersheds
- Flood prevention in the upper reaches of a watershed that's had previous significant downstream flooding
- Forest contiguity and ecosystem integrity in a high priority, unfragmented forest block
- Wildlife connectivity of important North-South and East-West wildlife corridors
- Climate change resiliency by protecting higher elevation sites for shifting species distributions
- Climate change mitigation via forest carbon sequestration and storage
- Permanent public access on the existing "Blue Ribbon Trail" and an opportunity for a higher-elevation back-country Nordic ski and snowshoe loop

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

### Ken Milkie

Ken Milkie first started volunteering with the land trust when UVLT teamed up with the Lyme Pinnacle Snowmobile Club to rebuild the Grant Brook Bridge near UVLT's Lyme Hill Conservation Area. "I am the trail administrator for the Lyme Pinnacle Snowmobile club. We maintain over 70 miles of trails in Lyme, Canaan, Dorchester, Orford, and Hanover. Several of these trails pass over UVLT lands," said Ken. Since then, he's been hooked! When UVLT needed a volunteer to blaze new trails at the Dismal at Pressey Brook Conservation Area in East Hanover we thought of Ken, who lives nearby. "It's close to my home, I hike there often," said Ken of the new conservation area. This year Ken has helped build a new trail network at Morey Mountain Conservation Area, maintained trails and bridges at Lyme Hill, and most recently helped UVLT to restore Billy Browns Barns at Mountain View Farm. "Ken was a huge help with the barn restoration" said Outreach and Donor Programs Coordinator Paul Blazeovich, "he came prepared for construction work with a generator and tools and was ready to work!" Thank you, Ken, for all the volunteering you have done this year.



Ken Milkie working on the barn restoration at Mountain View Farm in Orford, NH

## Good News for Gile *Woody Adams Conservation Forest*



From the fire tower on Gile Mountain, on a clear day one can see the highest summits in the Upper Valley and mountains far away -- Mount Ascutney, Killington Peak and the Green Mountains, Mount Cardigan, Smarts Mountain, Mount Moosilauke and many of the White Mountains beyond.

Every year thousands of people visit Gile Mountain, Norwich's highest peak. It's best known for the fire tower that provides spectacular 360 degree views. Few visitors realize that the land they hike and bike through is unprotected. And even fewer know of the ecological significance of Gile Ridge.

Now, UVLT and the Norwich Conservation Commission are launching a campaign to change that.

Working with landowner Tony Adams, we've arranged to buy and conserve 186 acres that stretches over the ridge from Turnpike Road to Chapel Hill Road. This land, to be named the Woody Adams Conservation Forest in honor of Tony Adams' father, sits between the Norwich Town Forest and the Town-owned property where the trailhead and fire tower are located.

"Good News" continues inside...



## GOOD DEEDS



UVLT Treasurer Allan Wieman signs documents that will secure the Adams property while UVLT and the Norwich Conservation Commission raise funds. Adapting to public health guidelines, the signing occurred outside of attorney Jack Candon's office, using the air conditioner as a tabletop.

## CONSERVED July – December 2020

**Crossroads Addition**  
Lyme, 16 acres

**Miner Grant**  
Canaan, 54 acres

**Hardscrabble Meadow**  
Lyme, 12 acres

# CROSSROADS ACADEMY:

## *Conserving an Uncommon Place*

Crossroads Academy, an independent, coeducational K-8 day school, moved to its Lyme campus about 20 years ago. Begun in 1991 as a K-3 program, Crossroads had outgrown the church basement that housed it, and needed more space for additional grades as the student body grew older. A portion of the 140 acres that became the Crossroads campus had been conserved by the prior owner. This land added rich dimensions to the school's curriculum and outdoor activities.

Last winter, a fresh look at infrastructure needs led to a complicated plan to add classroom buildings in the campus core and conserve an ecologically significant area adjacent to the previously conserved

**“It has been a long road with many twists and turns in bringing closure to a complex issue with strong and positive outcomes for all three uses - education, conservation and town recreation. The Upper Valley Land Trust has been an exceptional partner during this entire process, and on behalf of Crossroads, we thank you with sincerity.”**

**PHIL HARRISON,  
TRUSTEE EMERITUS,  
CROSSROADS ACADEMY**

land. Ultimately the school conserved 16.8 acres, including 1,800+ feet of frontage on Hewes Brook, more than 3 acres of wetlands, and sites where rare plants have been observed.

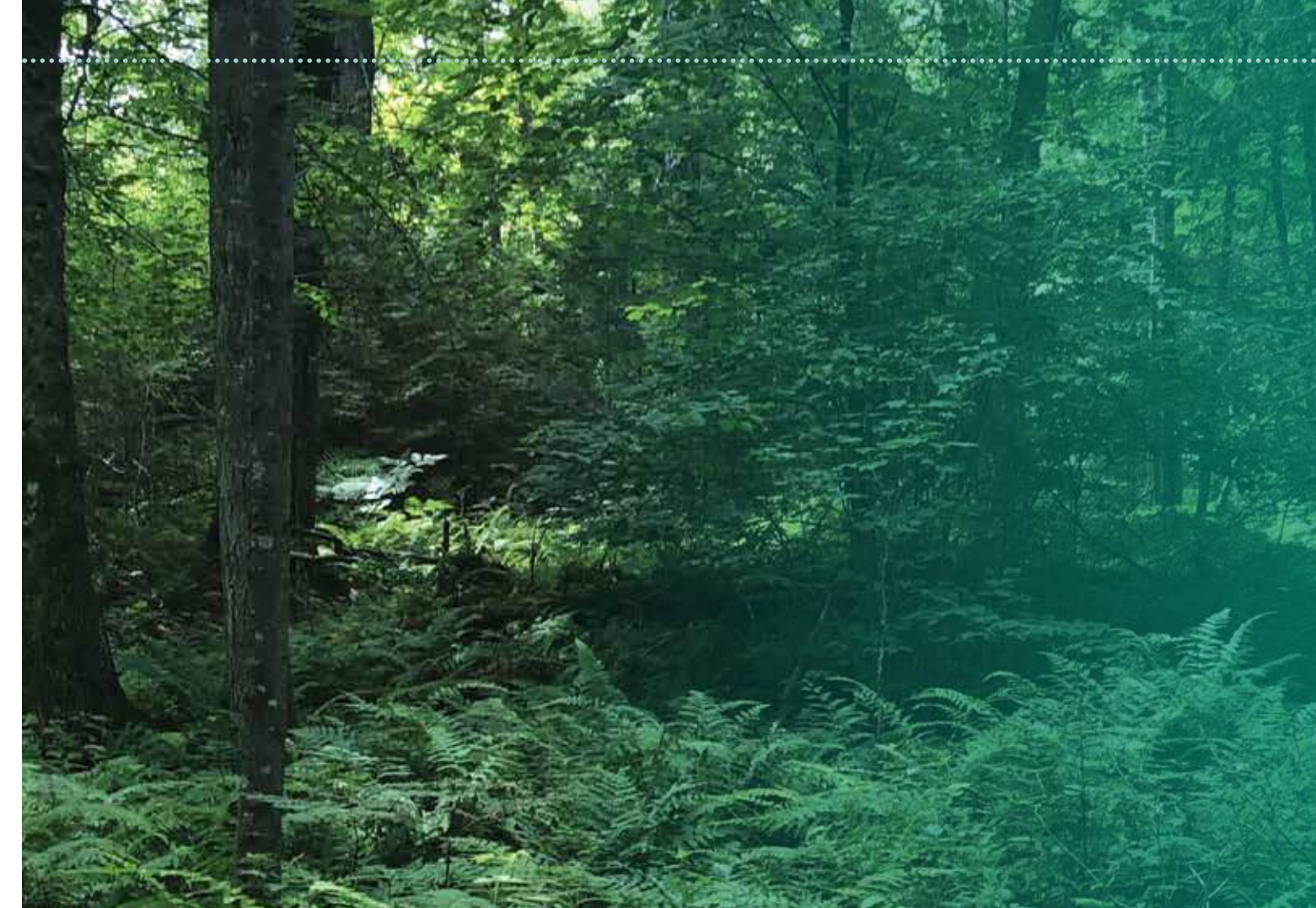
Together with the previously conserved land, the Crossroads Academy property now protects a healthy wetlands complex and riparian corridor draining to the Connecticut River, less than a half mile away.

In addition, the donated easement provides for public access to trails on the conserved land from trailhead parking located off Shoestrap Road, north of the campus core. This will be a welcome addition to trail offerings this winter since it is easily accessed from Route 10. Our Lyme Hill Conservation Area, just 1/4 mile north has been busy this summer and fall – the Crossroads property provides new variety and beauty to discover.

We are deeply appreciative of the foresight and stewardship of Crossroads Trustees. Integrating conservation into long-range campus planning is uncommon and requires much deliberation and consideration of the natural environment as well as the academic environment. Crossroads Academy has demonstrated, again, that is an uncommon school.

### Vital Statistics

- 16 acres adjacent to previously conserved 80 acres
- 1,846 feet of frontage on Hewes Brook, a Connecticut River tributary
- 3.2 acres of Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent, Seasonally Flooded wetlands
- Site of rare plant observations reported by the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau
- 834 feet of frontage on Shoestrap Road
- Access to trails for hiking and snowshoeing
- Easement donated by Crossroads Academy



# Miner Grant Easement Grows to 300 Acres

**Graham Colditz and Pat Cox are fascinated by the history of their land in Canaan.**

Graham and Pat live and work in St. Louis, Missouri, but since the 1980s they've spent summer and holiday periods at their South Road property. A 124 acre portion of their property was tracked back to the original grant from King George in the 1760s. The land was then owned by Thomas Miner who managed a sawmill and oversaw significant landholdings in Canaan. Another historic component of the property is the old Cobble Hill Cemetery located a ways off South Road, down a quiet wooded lane, to a hillside burial area rimmed with stonewalls and overseen by stately white pines.

In 2011, Graham and Pat donated a conservation easement conserving 253 acres. In recognition of the property's history, the conservation easement is known as the "Miner Grant."

Since their conservation gift nine years ago, Graham and Pat have continued to seek to combine large tracts of land back together when opportunities have arisen. Recently, a parcel of land that is surrounded by their conserved land on three sides came up for sale. Graham and Pat decided to purchase the 54 acres and fill a gap in the northern portion of their protected land by adding the acreage to their conservation easement.

Located off the old post road, South Road, this property consists entirely of forest with considerable acreage of locally important soils, classified as Forest Group 1A. The forest also includes small tributaries to the Indian River. Filling in a gap on an already conserved parcel, along with proximity to other conserved lands, including UVLT's Bear Pond Natural Area, Connor property and Risley Farmhouse property, this area of undeveloped forest land will continue to provide important habitat and enhance wildlife corridors.

## Going Virtual in 2021



Hikers at Signal Hill in Lebanon as a part of the fall Wild About Lebanon hiking series.

More information on each of these series will be available on our website in the coming weeks: [www.UVLT.org/calendar](http://www.UVLT.org/calendar)

The new year brings the start of three returning winter programs going virtual in 2021.

### Wild About Lebanon:

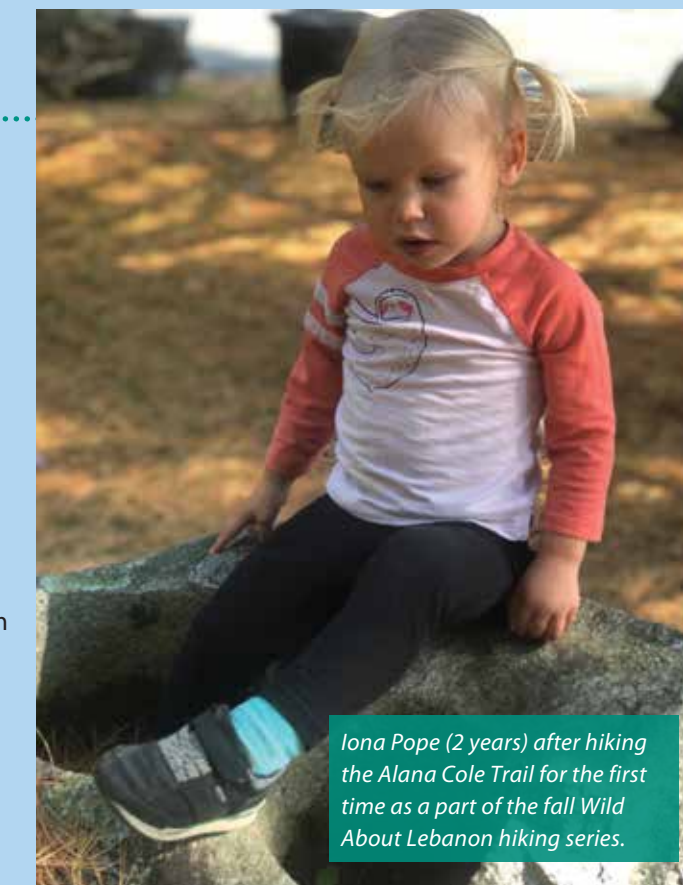
The Wild About Lebanon program has been running successful in person events since 2018. The program, run by UVLT and the City of Lebanon Conservation Department, showcases different conserved lands throughout Lebanon and aims to help everyone get outside. New Winter hiking activities and recommendations will be up on our website in January.

### Voices of the Land:

UVLT's environmentally themed book series back in 2021! We will read four books in four months from January to April and meet once a month over zoom to discuss them. There will also be at least one special event with an author guest speaker! We will meet the second Wednesday of each month at 6pm.

### Lunch & Learn:

Join us for a series of four lunchtime lectures from January to April on the Third Thursday of the month at 12pm. Lectures include a variety of topics about the outdoors and the Upper Valley.



Iona Pope (2 years) after hiking the Alana Cole Trail for the first time as a part of the fall Wild About Lebanon hiking series.

## THE STEWARD SHIP



David Goudy reached out to UVLT in April as he made plans for the 15' pontoon boat that he had set up as a work boat. "It has a flat deck with only an operator console but no built-in seats or tables," he wrote. "The thought occurred to me that UVLT might have a use for it for maintaining/monitoring your river campsites."

To that we said enthusiastically, "Yes!" David's generous gift of the boat and boat trailer was

put to good use this summer. Joining in the generosity is Robert Bartlett at Fairlee Marine who donated wrapping and storage to keep the boat safe and sound this winter. We thank David and Robert for supporting UVLT's conservation and stewardship mission — on land and water!