



Site Lines

SUMMER 2016

SOUTH KINGSTOWN
LAND TRUST

GREAT OUTDOORS CELEBRATION & AUCTION IN AUGUST

Join us on Sunday, August 14, from 4-6:30 p.m. at the SKLT Barn for our annual Great Outdoors Celebration & Auction. This fun and festive afternoon, with a live auction of original works by local artists plus dining and travel adventures, celebrates our successful saving of more than 2,700 acres of beautiful South Kingstown land and raises support for further land acquisition and preservation. The gregarious and legendary garden designer and horticulturist Louis Raymond will again entertain us as our auctioneer.

Travel adventures include a one-week stay in a wonderful four-bedroom home in Boca Grande, Fl., complete with a great pool and a golf cart! We are pleased to offer a limited-edition framed print "Atlantic Crossing" by Rhode Island marine artist John Mecray and a beautiful watercolor (photo) by Mimi Sammis, donated by Holly Smith, will



also be available.

We wish to thank our honorary chairs Karin and Jim Aukerman and the following generous sponsors: Chris Gaffney & Karen Kames, Ken & Dottie Woodcock, Susan Seyfarth Lovejoy, David & Carolyn Moulthrop, P. Schurman Contractors, Shoreline Properties Inc., James V. Aukerman &

Associates, Coastal Properties, Citizens Bank, Martha Day & CN Hetzner, John & Carol Howland, Howard Johnson Inc., Ocean Mist, Rose & Kiernan Inc., SmithCo Oil Service Inc. and Sweenor Builders. To become a sponsor, contact Anne O'Neill at anne.oneill@sklt.org.

Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door. Look for your invitation in the mail soon. Be sure to bring a friend to enjoy a lovely afternoon and help protect open space. Thank you for your support!

SKLT RECEIVES NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

In February, SKLT was notified that we have achieved national accreditation, a mark of honor in land conservation. We're proud to have met the rigorous standards of the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Achieving accreditation will help assure local landowners, granting agencies and private donors that SKLT does a great job protecting and stewarding land in our town. Accreditation demonstrates our ongoing commitment to permanent land conservation.

SKLT joins 342 land trusts nationwide that demonstrate their commitment to professional excellence through

accreditation. In all, over 75 percent of private lands conserved by land trusts are now held by an accredited land trust. Each accredited land trust meets extensive documentation requirements and undergoes a rigorous review as part of its application. More about land trust accreditation can be found at www.landtrustaccreditation.org.





CONTINUED ACHIEVEMENTS IN LAND PROTECTION

SKLT is very near to closing on the development rights on the 40-acre Whaley Farm on Jerry Brown Farm Road. Thanks to the generosity of more than 80 donors, including a major gift by Christopher Gaffney and Karen Kames that took us over the top, we raised more than \$118,000 for this project. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed! After closing, we'll celebrate!

In addition to the private donations we received, Representative Kathy Fogarty presented a \$5,000 legislative grant, and the South Kingstown Town Council voted in May to approve a grant from the Town Open Space Bond fund to finish the fundraising needed for the purchase, up to \$85,000. Early funding commitments by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the 1772 Foundation and the Rhode Island Agricultural Land Preservation Commission (ALPC), led the way in protecting this farm. The landowners also contributed by agreeing to a bargain sale for the development rights. The Whaleys will continue to own and operate the farm into the future; nothing will change except that the land will never be developed.

Earlier this year, on March 23, SKLT closed on the purchase of the development rights on 61 acres of forest, wetlands and former farm land on Liberty Lane in West Kingston. SKLT thanks the ALPC for its contribution of funds for the purchase. The protection of this land is strategically important because it abuts the largest natural wildlife habitat area in our town, the Great Swamp Management Area, owned by Rhode Island Department of



Rep. Kathy Fogarty presents a check for \$5,000 for the Whaley Farm to Land Protection Director Joanne Riccitelli Photo: Anne O'Neill

Environmental Management. The Great Swamp is over 2,500 acres in size, holds the state's largest freshwater pond and provides habitat to many species. We are very pleased to add contiguous protected land to this large preserved complex.

Some people wonder how much protected land is enough for our town. From a broad perspective, consider that the projected buildout analysis done by the Town estimates that our town's population could increase by 38%, based on available buildable land. An analysis could examine whether that amount of growth would strain our roads, water supplies,

schools and other infrastructure, in addition to changing the 'sense of place' in town. Looking at the same question from a different perspective, we at SKLT aim to continue to protect important natural and agricultural land when it's the right time for the landowner, whenever that might be.



Jeanine Silversmith leads a program for Family Day at SKLT's chestnut orchard in May. Photo: Sophie Lewis

PROTECTING FARMLAND

One of SKLT's objectives is the preservation of local agricultural lands and the tradition of farming. During our town's early history, agriculture was the main economic activity, producing food for local consumption and for trade with Europe and other colonies. In the early 19th century, agricultural production peaked and then began to drop off as once-rich farm soils began to play out, a new industry attracted labor away from farms to textile mills, and railroads opened our markets to food from richer agricultural lands to our west. By the early 20th century, only the most productive soils and hardest working farmers could stay in production, and vast swaths of cleared rocky pasture land began to grow up into the mixed hardwood forests that we see today.

Now we treasure our remaining local farms for their physical beauty, potential to produce healthier food, and as sites for new agricultural economies, such as farm-to-table restaurants. They represent a measure of our quality of life and form the basis of one of the state's most dynamic economic sectors, "The Green Economy." And, the stone walls and cultivated fields that change with the seasons and the open pastures and barns both new and old give us a sense of tradition.

One way that SKLT protects farmland is by acquiring conservation easements, where we buy the development value of the farmland, preserving the agricultural potential of the property, while the landowner retains ownership and the right to farm, receiving most of the value of the property without having to sell for development. SKLT partners with such agencies as the Town of South Kingstown, the RI Agricultural Land Preservation Commission, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to preserve farmland. SKLT has protected over 1100 acres of productive farmland in our town.

We also protect farmland through full ownership of farms, received either by purchase or donation. These include Weeden Farm (97 ac), Elysium Farm (14 ac) and Bayfield Farm (30 ac) in Matunuck, Hollis Tucker Farm (55 ac) and Bittersweet Farm (12 ac) in Tuckertown, and Robinson Farm (45 ac) in Wakefield. All of these



Photo: Sarah Miller

properties permanently protected by from development. Our management plans for each property are tailored to their unique size, location, quality of farming potential and suitability for public access. For example, Weeden Farm stands out for its visibility on Matunuck Beach Road. SKLT leases the fields for hay and corn production to a neighboring farmer, and our volunteers and staff have restored centuries-old stone walls to open up broad views of the fields, where a perimeter walking trail is open to the public.

The Hollis Tucker Farm, by contrast, was acquired for the principal purpose of protecting public groundwater supplies for Wakefield and Narragansett. But with 35 acres of level, prime agricultural soils, the site is perfect for agriculture. So, SKLT leases farmland to organic producers under a specific management plan designed to rebuild soils and prevent groundwater pollution. We also partner with the URI Master Gardeners, The American Chestnut Foundation, and the South County Garden Club to grow a disease-resistant strain of American Chestnut.

SKLT is an eager participant in efforts to conserve farmland and promote sustainable agriculture for an economically and environmentally resilient community. In keeping with our mission of protecting the natural resources of our town for the enduring benefit of the community, we will continue to work to protect our agricultural land and heritage.



Save These Dates - Events at SKLT Barn (unless noted)

Sunday, July 10	Antique Auto Show, 10am to 4pm
Sunday, August 14	Great Outdoors Celebration & Auction, 4 to 6:30pm
Thursday, August 18	*Hot Dog Roast & Farm Dog concert, 5:30 to 8pm
Sunday, September 11	*Sculpture Trail walk, 3 to 5pm, Green Hill Beach Rd

For information on the English Country Dances held at the SKLT Barn, visit www.kingstonenglishcountrydance.org.

* Please register at jeanine@sklt.org or call 789-0962 ext. 1.

As we plan ahead to the fall and winter, we are looking to continue our rich array of event offerings, as well as expanding into new and different arenas. If you have any ideas, or would like to offer a program, please contact Jeanine Silversmith, Membership Coordinator at jeanine@sklt.org.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

After 11 years, Mike Sherry has stepped down as president of SKLT and remains on the Board of Trustees. During his tenure, Mike led the organization in new ventures to preserve South Kingstown's cultural heritage, first supporting the Samuel E. Perry Grist Mill donation from Bob and Diane Smith, and more recently the transfer of the Hale House to SKLT ownership. Taking care of buildings has brought new challenges to SKLT, and Mike is staying a step ahead of each one. Mike has also been instrumental in facilitating projects between Boy Scout troops and SKLT. A huge thank you to Mike for his leadership of the board, and also for continuing to serve on the board.

The office has also seen some change, with Jane Baumann's departure in May after eight years keeping SKLT members informed on our activities and up to date in dues payments! We will miss the warmth and enthusiasm that Jane brought to events, greeting visitors, corresponding with both current and prospective

members and covering all her other responsibilities. She was a cheerful member of the team, and her personal attention made everyone feel valued and included in all Land Trust initiatives. She has moved on to work with the South County Art Association at Helme House in Kingstown. Thank you, Jane, for your years of hard work for SKLT.



We welcome Jeanine Silversmith (photo) to the staff as our new Membership Coordinator. Jeanine has two decades of experience in both formal and informal education. She serves as the Project Coordinator for the state Environmental Literacy Plan for the Rhode Island Environmental Education Association. In addition, she is Founder and Director of RI Families in Nature and author of *The Rhode Island Family Hiking Guide and Journal*. We're happy to have you on board!

▼▼▼ ANTIQUE AUTO SHOW RETURNS IN JULY



Photo: Don Bousquet & Son Photography

If you have missed the great Antique Auto Show at the Barn the past year or two, relax - it will return to the Barn on Sunday, July 10th. This has been a very popular event, and this year, as it returns to the Barn, we think it will be really special. All proceeds will go to replenish SKLT's Grist Mill fund after its use for renovations of the old turbine and the sluiceway from the pond to the mill. It will be a great time!

5

CELEBRATE LAND TRUST DAYS WITH SKLT >>>

On Sunday, September 11th at 3 p.m., join us for a walk around our Sculpture Trail in Green Hill. The Sculpture Trail occupies about three upland acres of an otherwise wet and forested 22.2 acres of protected land. The flat and easy trail takes the visitor by twenty three installations created from a variety of materials. This project was the brainchild of longtime supporters Troy West, who will lead the hike, and Claudia Flynn. SKLT thanks them for their inspiration and hard work.



USE YOUR IRA TO MAKE A CHARITABLE GIFT

An IRA Rollover can be a great way to support SKLT and save you money at tax time. Included in the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 is the permanent extension of the Charitable IRA Rollover. This allows individuals to make charitable gifts from their individual retirement accounts (IRAs) tax free in 2016 and beyond.

- If you are 70½ or older, you may transfer up to \$100,000 directly from an IRA to a charity free of federal tax. (Some states may tax transfers.)
- Your transfer must come directly from your plan administrator to the charity.
- The transfer may count toward your required minimum distribution.

Please consult with your tax advisor before making a gift to the South Kingstown Land Trust from your IRA. To learn more, contact Anne O'Neill at anne.oneill@sklt.org or 401-789-0962 ext 3.



MILESTONES

Along the roads of South Kingstown, milestones indicate that someone, on foot, horseback, bicycle, wagon, buggy, or car, has traversed 5,280 feet. Milestones indicate progress, not end points, and SKLT has reached several milestones this year. In February, after three years of hard work, SKLT received accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. We have a new strategic plan to guide our actions for the next five years. I have been elected to succeed the irreplaceable Mike Sherry as President. The Board of Trustees and SKLT's entire membership thank Mike for many years and uncountable hours of service. I feel very grateful for the great strides SKLT has made under his leadership. My hope is that momentum will carry forward in my term as President.

In developing our strategic plan, the board recognized that our mission can embrace growing in ways other than protecting and conserving land. By hosting many educational events, members and non-members have learned about polar ice caps, bird migration, bats, coyotes, bobcats and winter moths. We are working hard to bring you many more programs of interest, not only about local flora and fauna, but also the agricultural, historical and cultural values that enrich this community.

A big part of our mission to protect and conserve open space and natural resources involves the farming community, past and present. As we walk the trails in Browning Woods, Crawley Preserve, or Jones Camp, we can see the homestead foundations and walls of the old fields. I am always amazed to think that farmers once lived and worked these seemingly inhospitable areas. On stony, hilly lands, on meager soils, farmers raised families and maintained farms for generations. The historical and cultural significance of these lands enhance their preservation value. Visiting those properties makes me want to know more about their history.

We hope you will agree with our proposal to include in our mission the notions of protecting sites of scenic beauty and preserving, in perpetuity, local properties of cultural and historical significance. With your assistance, our Board of Trustees is embarking, one step at a time, on the quest of reaching other milestones this year. We look forward to your support.

Sincerely,


Martha Day, President

SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST

The mission of the South Kingstown Land Trust is to conserve and protect the natural resources and open spaces of our town for the enduring benefit of our community.

Officers

President: Martha Day
Vice President: Susan S. Lovejoy
Secretary: Linda Green
Treasurer: James Farrell
Assistant Treasurer: Charles Lewis

Trustees

Heather Mae Breau
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Joanne Riccitelli,
Land Protection Director
Clarkson Collins,
Land Management Director
Michael Bontecou,
Land Operations Coordinator
Anne O'Neill,
Development Director
Jeanine Silversmith,
Membership Coordinator

Main Office
227 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI 02879
401-789-0962
Field Office (SKLT Barn)
17 Matunuck Beach Road
401-783-4999

Site Lines Designer, Cindy Sabato, Volunteer

Like SKLT on Facebook!



VISIT HALE HOUSE THIS SUMMER

The summer season is upon us, and the Hale House is ready. While the house is owned by SKLT, the Matunuck Preservation Society is the organization that plans its programming, and they have just announced this summer's schedule, which you can view on www.Halehouser.org. Some programs require advance registration as the house can accommodate relatively small numbers of people. Free tours take place from 1 - 4 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays through Labor Day. Admission is also free, so we would love to see all our members come by for a visit. A new feature this summer is a film about the house and the Hale family that resided there for 34 summers. The film will be shown continually, so drop by and take a peek.



Photo: Deb Stallwood

7

JOIN US IN PRESERVING OPEN SPACE IN SOUTH KINGSTOWN

Your support for open space preservation continues to strengthen our organization and invigorate our work. Join or renew your membership, make a general donation, or become an EverGreen member! SKLT is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization so your donation is tax-deductible. As always, your generosity is greatly appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP:

I would like to: ☐ Join ☐ Renew

- ☐ Individual\$30
- ☐ Family\$50
- ☐ Protector\$75
- ☐ Steward\$100-\$249
- ☐ Guardian\$250-\$499
- ☐ Conservator\$500-\$999
- ☐ Benefactor\$1000+

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

GENERAL DONATION:

I'm already a member, but I would like to make a general donation. Please accept my check in the amount of \$_____.



EVERGREEN:

I have already planned a gift to SKLT and qualify to be an EverGreen member through:

- ☐ Estate Plans ☐ Trust ☐ Other
- ☐ I am a landowner interested in preserving my land.
- ☐ Please contact me about making a Legacy gift.
- ☐ My employer will match my gift. I've enclosed a matching gift form.

Please make checks payable to:

South Kingstown Land Trust

227 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI 02879



SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST
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WAKEFIELD, RI 02879

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via email, please let us know!*

Sitelines



COME BACK FOR OUR HOT DOG ROAST ON AUGUST 18!

As part of RI Land Trust Days, SKLT will once again host a hot dog roast on the lawns of the Barn on Thursday, August 18. After our feast, we will hear local band Farm Dog, which formed in a barn, coincidentally, in southern Rhode Island four years ago. After a jam session, they realized they all loved the same kind of music, mainly classic rock. They've expanded their set list to almost 200 songs and have been known to pull off requests on the spot that have never been rehearsed. We're excited to welcome them to Matunuck! Let us know if you can come by emailing Jeanine at Jeanine@sklt.org. The event runs from 5:30 - 8 p.m. and a \$5 donation per person is requested. Bring your lawn chairs!

8



OPEN SPACE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE