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Ice forms a delicate pattern on the surface of a stream at Wiessner Woods.

*"Local is the new organic."
- Bill McKibben*

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Stowe Land Trust is dedicated to the conservation of scenic, recreational, and productive farm and forest lands for the benefit of the greater Stowe community.

All contributions to Stowe Land Trust are tax deductible. Please become a member today.

From the Executive Director and Board Chair



Heather Furman *Elaine Nichols*

Bringing closure to SLT's 21st year of protecting valuable open space provides an opportunity to reflect on all of the people who make our work possible. From our all-volunteer board, our dedicated members and financial supporters, to the people who provide stewardship on our conserved lands, SLT is made up of people who care deeply about Stowe's scenic beauty, opportunities for recreation, and the continuation of our agricultural heritage. SLT retired two of those people from its Board of Directors this year: Peggy Smith and Leslie Gauff. Both Peggy and Leslie deserve our most sincere appreciation for their extraordinary dedication and enthusiasm for SLT's work. SLT will miss their fresh ideas, fundraising skill, and sense of humor! At the same time, we welcome the energy and dedication of a few new faces and look forward to their contributions in the New Year.

The work we do as a community - with your input - to protect critical open space is a demonstration of the ways, large and small, that we bring hope to the future of Stowe. A piece of farmland protected today gives future farmers a chance to produce food locally, here at home. Only with you

joining with us, are we able to create and care for trails, protect water supplies and fragile ecosystems.

The way we live on our landscape today will affect our livelihoods long into the future. So in these challenging and uncertain times, SLT's mission is more important than ever. We believe in a Stowe where land conservation enhances our ability to create a more vibrant, economically healthy, and genuinely livable community. We have exciting things planned for you this year - bringing renown conservationist and author Bill McKibben to Stowe, restoring the Mill Trail Cabins for public use, and of course, conserving more of our most important natural areas. We need your membership support in 2009 - the work we do together will create a vibrant future for all of those who love Stowe. Thank you!

Please Welcome SLT's New Board Chair

At Stowe Land Trust's annual meeting in November, the Board of Directors elected Elaine Nichols as its newest Chair. Having served as Vice Chair for the last two years, Lainie is already very engaged in the organization and knows much about the responsibility of governing SLT. We recently asked Lainie a few questions to give our members a chance to get to know the new Board Chair.

Mountain Views: How did you come to be involved with Stowe Land Trust?

Lainie: I first became involved a number of years ago when Executive Director, Heather Furman, contacted me to ask for help with the legal work for the Nichols (no relation) conservation project, which ultimately led to being asked to sit on the board. The rest is history.

Mountain Views: With over 3,000 acres conserved on 27 properties, what do you see as SLT's priorities as it enters its third decade of

conservation work?

Lainie: What do I hope to see accomplished in the next few years? First, that the organization sustain itself. The current financial situation is a real challenge for non-profits just to keep the doors open. This should be our priority in the short term. The long-range



Lainie at the recent Mill Trail workday.

view is to identify key parcels and develop relationships with prospective donors. Even if we can't pursue projects as aggressively as we might want, we can still set the stage for acquisitions when the economy recovers. Of course, if something comes along that can be completed within our budget-

ary constraints, we should evaluate it and give due consideration.

Mountain Views: Do you have a favorite SLT property?

Lainie: My favorite is Wiessner Woods, particularly in the winter. There's just something about the trail network that is really special.

Bill McKibben Friday, February 6, 2009 Akeley Memorial Building

Spend an inspiring evening among family and friends while supporting land conservation in your community!

Doors open at 7:00 pm

Admission at the \$25 Pinnacle level will get you preferred seating and a complimentary beverage. General admission is \$15 which includes a raffle ticket for an autographed copy of one of Bill McKibben's books.

Purchase one of McKibben's many important works at the event and have it signed by this revolutionary author following the talk.

Tickets are available for purchase from Stowe Land Trust by calling (802) 253-7221. Seating is limited so call for tickets today.

Have dinner at Harrison's that evening and 10% of the sale will go to support Stowe Land Trust.



Bill McKibben is an American environmentalist and writer who frequently addresses the challenging issues of global warming, alternative energy, and the risks associated with human genetic engineering. Recent publications including, *Fight Global Warming Now* and *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*

seek to address some of the greatest challenges facing this generation. His other books include *The Bill McKibben Reader: Pieces from and Active Life*; *The End of Nature*; *Hope, Human, and Wild*; *Maybe One*; *Enough*; and *Wandering Home*.

A former staff writer for *The New Yorker*, McKibben is a frequent contributor to *Harper's*, *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Orion Magazine*, *Mother Jones*, *Rolling Stone* and *Outside*.

McKibben has been awarded Guggenheim and Lyndhurst fellowships, and won the Lannan Prize for non-fiction writing in 2000. He is a scholar in residence at Middlebury College and lives with his family in Ripton, Vermont.

McKibben Photo Credit: Nancie Battaglia

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Grow Your Independence: Gardening, Homesteading and Sustaining Your Family Right in Your Backyard

Stowe Land Trust is organizing a series designed to help aspiring and advanced gardeners gain independence from the global food economy and overcome the myths and challenges of growing food in Stowe's climate.

The gardening series will include a combination of indoor workshops and hands on demonstrations at different locations in the community. Some of the topics that will be covered include:

- Seed catalogs and local seed sources
- Planting for our climate and challenging growing conditions
- Working new garden spaces
- Succession gardening in compact spaces
- Tips on producing your own food
- Laying hen systems
- Community gardening
- Root cellaring
- Canning and food preservation



A schedule for this series will be available soon. Please contact Stowe Land Trust if you have any questions or have thoughts on a great demonstration for this series.

Have You Renewed Your Membership for 2009?

By joining early, Stowe Land Trust supporters can make the most of their membership benefits and save SLT money in postage and mailings.

Your membership benefits include:

- Over 3,000 acres of protected farm, forest and recreation land
- Breathtaking views
- Local food production
- Miles of trails with public access
- Excellent water quality

Please Renew Today!

SLT Bids Farewell to Two Outstanding Board Members

For the better part of Stowe Land Trust's existence, Peggy Smith and Leslie Gauff have been a driving force behind the organization's success. Each of them have served for over a decade working tirelessly as board members and leaders of the development and fundraising committees. They could be called on to continuously come up with creative ways not only to raise funds but to get people truly invested in the work of SLT.



Peggy has been an enthusiastic fundraiser, garnering support for many of Stowe Land Trust's conservation projects. She has led the board in planning and ensuring the success of fundraising events over the years. Executive director, Heather Furman, has said of Peggy "[She] is capable of single-handedly accomplishing what would take 10 of us to achieve".

Leslie's incredible sense of commitment and strong environmental ethic are evident in everything she does. She has always been a reliable source of support with a sound word of advice and thoughtful feedback. Her contributions to the nuts and bolts functioning of Stowe Land Trust have made the work of staff easier and more effective.



Both Peggy and Leslie have demonstrated an enormous commitment to Stowe Land Trust and the community is fortunate to have these two dedicated individuals as residents.

A Special Thanks to Outgoing Chair, Gaetano Vicinelli

As Stowe Land Trust's leadership is turned over to a new Chair, SLT would like to recognize and thank Gaetano Vicinelli for the significant contributions he made which have benefited the organization during his tenure.



During Gaetano's term as Chair, Stowe Land Trust was able to effectively build its capacity to meet the growing demands for new conservation projects, responsible stewardship and more proactive outreach. Whether in Florida or Stowe, Gaetano has always been exceedingly generous with his time and insight. His style as a leader was always direct and open when working as the conduit between staff and board members.

Gaetano's leadership and vision was paramount to the success of Stowe Land Trust's transformation these last few years. Thank you!



Congratulations and Thank You!

When Kate Witten and Will Krause announced they were getting married, Kate's parents knew they wanted to mark the special occasion with a memorable and timeless gift. As members of Stowe Land Trust, the Witten's recognized the enduring legacy conserved land represents and felt that a contribution to support those efforts would be a gift worthy of commemorating their daughter's marriage. Kate and Will were married on October 4th. Thanks to the generous contribution made by Roger and Jill Witten to the Maple Run Lane campaign, Stowe Land Trust was able to close on the conservation project less than a week before the wedding.

Stowe Land Trust is grateful for the Witten's generosity and we wish Kate and Will many years of happiness in their life together.

Become an SLT volunteer!

Volunteering is an excellent way for SLT members to play a vital role in the day to day tasks of saving land. If you are interested, please contact Rebecca Washburn, at (802) 253 - 7221.

The board of directors provides invaluable expertise, counsel, and support to Stowe Land Trust. We are pleased to welcome four new members.

Charlotte Brynn



A native New Zealander and Stowe resident for eleven years, Charlotte is the Executive Director at The Swimming Hole and one of Stowe Land Trust's newest board members. She

is an active member of the community with her involvement in the Stowe Tennis Club and her assistance with Stowe Mountain Bike Club's children's program. Charlotte enjoys an array of outdoor activities with her husband Jeff and two children, Heidi and Soeren. Charlotte has already demonstrated her value as a board member with her contributions to Stowe Land Trust's membership committee. Her interest and experience will also bring fresh ideas to our outreach and membership programs.

Barbara Getty



Drawn to the Stowe area because of their love of skiing, Barbara and her family moved to Stowe four years ago. Hiking and particularly skiing are popular pastimes

she shares with her husband Chris Bowles and their two children Joe and Ashley. In her time here as a realtor with Coldwell Banker Carlson Real Estate, Barbara's interest in land conservation has grown as she watched development transforming the local landscape. Barbara's knowledge of the community gained from her work as a realtor will be a valuable asset to SLT's development committee.

Richard Hennessey



Growing up in Massachusetts, Richard spent summers in Stowe with his family where an early appreciation for his natural surroundings was sparked by views from his grandfather's

home. Later Richard attended Middlebury College and Vermont Law School. As a law student he held an internship with the Upper Valley Land Trust where he learned much about stewardship of conserved lands. Richard currently works for a law firm in Montpelier and lives in Stowe with his wife and newborn daughter, Annabelle. In addition to his valuable internship experience, his legal expertise will be an asset to Stowe Land Trust.

David Hosmer



After 29 years of teaching biostatistics at UMASS Amherst, David retired in 2002 and moved to Stowe with his wife Trina, to become full time residents. It didn't

take long for David and his wife to find their niche in the community. They are involved in several local organizations including the Stowe Bike Club, Stowe Nordic Outing Club, and Lamoille River Anglers. David quickly became a familiar face at the Wiessner Woods and Mill Trail work days. It was clear that Stowe Land Trust would benefit from his tireless energy and commitment to stewardship of conserved lands.



Lending a Hand, Making a Difference

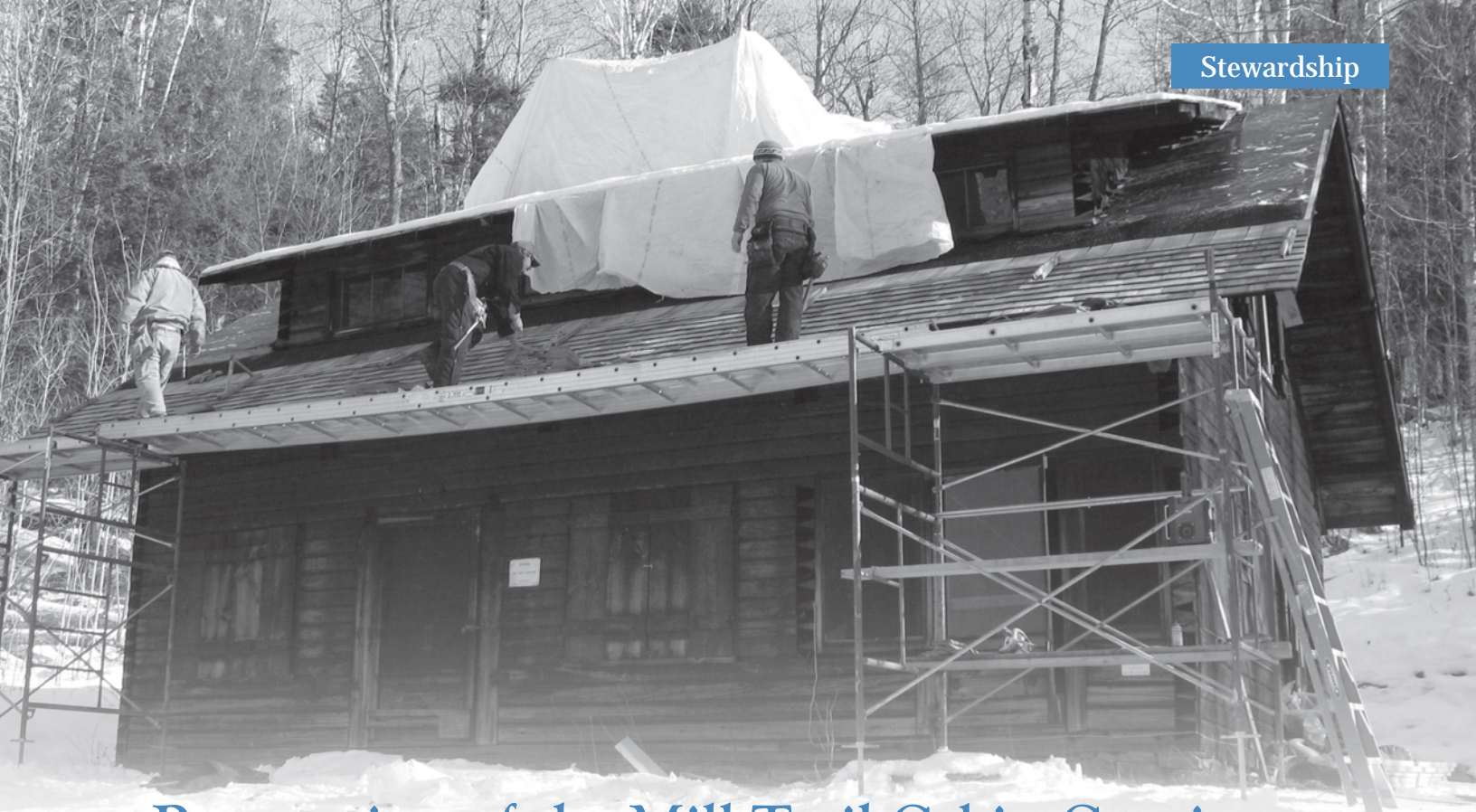
The Taylors are a family that takes community service seriously. After moving to Stowe in 1992, Rob and Deb were introduced to Stowe Land Trust by their friends, the Lepine sisters. Rob and Deb and their two sons, Cameron (12) and Graham (10) spend as much time as possible hiking, biking, skiing, swimming, running and otherwise recreating outdoors. It made perfect sense then that they get involved helping Stowe Land Trust conserve lands they spend so much time enjoying.

Deb Taylor served a term on the Board of Directors in 2004 when SLT was conserving the Nichols Field. Since then, the family has volunteered in the critical capacity as stewards of conserved land. Most recently they have taken their spirit of volunteerism to new levels. Your SLT membership letter is one of thousands that are sent out each year and there is a good chance one of the Taylors carefully folded and stuffed that letter into its envelope.

When asked why they volunteer their time to SLT, the family replied that "they are strong believers in the spirit and ethic of community service and that helping out the land trust allows Cameron and Graham the chance to feel like they are making a difference".

Stowe Land Trust is grateful for their support and most of all, their commitment to the conservation of our special places.





Restoration of the Mill Trail Cabin Continues

“Who would know you were so close to the ski resort, condos, and Mountain Road from up here.”

-Alan Thorndike

This a common statement made by visitors to Mill Trail. One of the conserved property's most endearing features is the tranquility and quiet it offers despite being so close to town. The historic cabins located on the property enhance rather than detract from the important natural resources found on the steep slope adjacent to Notchbrook. Since Stowe Land Trust purchased the property in 2003, it has been looking for the most appropriate way to manage the land and historic structures while sharing the story this landscape has to tell.

One thing is certain, the Mill Trail property holds relics from generations of use and it is important that the community not lose its connection to that history. Stowe Land Trust made the decision that the cabins built by Helen Day Montenari and Margauite Lichtenthaeler are an important part of the story and should not be allowed to deteriorate. After having an assessment done to determine what needed to be done to restore the cabins, Stowe Land Trust set to work seeking expertise and funding to pay for the undertaking.

A grant submitted in 2008 to pay for replacement of the upper cabin roof was disappointingly denied during the first round of funding. With the help of a dedicated group of volunteers and

the skillful labor provided by Steel Construction, we went ahead with the first phase and stripped the 45 year old roof. Stowe Land Trust continued to benefit from the generosity of local contractors. John Flint and Caleb Mayo of Pyramid Stoneworks offered to donate their masonry skills to rebuild the fieldstone chimney and repair one of the cabin's impressive fireplaces.



Nights were getting cold and Mount Mansfield had donned its frosty blanket when word came from the State Historic Preservation Division that our \$10,000 grant had been selected for funding. Meanwhile, Shap Smith from Patterson Smith had offered to donate a crew to work on the project for a very modest price. The photo above shows the Patterson Smith crew hard at work on a brisk day at the beginning of December.

During this season of giving thanks, Stowe Land Trust has a lot to be thankful for. Because of the generosity of local businesses, support from partners and the community, and the hard work of volunteers, Stowe Land Trust enters the new year another step closer to ensuring these cabins remain to tell their story of Stowe's history.

Winter Bird Feeding



iStock Photo

Winter winds begin to blow, temperatures drop, and a blanket of snow covers the ground. Many people move south to warmer climates at the first touch of a northerly wind on their faces. The same is true for most of the feathered friends which make our forests home during the summer months. However, several common bird species like chickadees, cardinals, and blue jays choose to brave the frigid winter weather often dining on food we put out for them. It is because of their winter foraging that this is the perfect season for attracting birds to your yard.

Bird's calorie requirements increase in the

winter to the point where they need to eat 1/3 to 3/4 of their body weight in order to keep warm and maintain energy to continue foraging for food. This can prove challenging when snow covers seeds and other food

sources on the ground and ice frequently coats tree buds. Providing a known and reliable source of food helps them reserve energy and gives them the nourishing meal they need in winter.



One visit to the local hardware store and it is clear that there are dozens of options for feeding birds. By offering a variety of seed mixes in several different feeders you can attract a larger mix of species and reduce the chances of overcrowding at your feeders.

Black oil sunflower seeds are most popular with seed eating birds like cardinals, jays, finches and chickadees. Offering cracked corn will attract juncos, mourning doves and jays. A creative and fun way for children to participate in preparing a meal for your feathered guests is by spreading peanut butter on a pine cone and rolling it in birdseed. Hang the cone outside from a branch or feeder and watch the bird's excitement.

Many bird foods can be found right in your pantry like popped popcorn and oatmeal. You are sure to see the brightly colored oriole outside your window if you put out slices of orange, its favorite fruit. Birds also enjoy the occasional treat like doughnuts, crackers, jellies and coconut meat.

Suet is an important part of a bird's winter diet as it replaces the fat gained from eating insects in the warmer months. Suet blended with seeds and grit can be purchased ready for hanging. See the hanging heaven suet recipe in the side bar if you would like to make your own.

Water is another scarce resource in winter. Birds need water year round for bathing and drinking. You can choose to set out a warm pan of water each day or purchase a birdbath with a heating element that will keep ice from forming.

Don't forget the grit! Birds use sand and bits of gravel to aid digestion and as a source of minerals. By adding coarse sand to your seed mixes or suet, they will not be missing this essential component.

Planting living feeders is the easiest way to provide birds with a dependable meal and shelter from the elements. There are a variety of trees and shrubs which offer a nutritious meal of berries and buds and attract the greatest variety of birds. Holly, winterberry, shad blow and high bush cranberry are great native planting options. Contact your local nursery for more information about trees and shrubs that fit your location.

Now that you have prepared the perfect meal, grab your binoculars, find a cozy chair by the window and enjoy birdwatching.

Winter Bird Food Recipe



Hanging Heaven

- 3 parts suet
- 1 part cornmeal
- 1 part peanut butter
- 1 part brown sugar
- 1 part dried fruit (i.e. raisins)
- 1 part mixed seed or broken nuts
- Sprinkling of sand
- 1 or more coconut shells (halved)

Melt suet, allow to cool, then re-melt. Stir in other ingredients. Cook until the mixture is the consistency of porridge. If too thick, add small amounts of water or milk; if too thin, add flour. Pour into coconut halves. Hang from tree limbs or eaves.



Photo of Grandview Barn taken by Matt Larson.

Stowe Land Trust thanks these local businesses for their ongoing support!



CARLSON
REALESTATE
On the corner of Main



Having trouble reading
this newsletter?



SLT might have your glasses!
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