

# THE AUSBON SARGENT LAND PRESERVATION TRUST

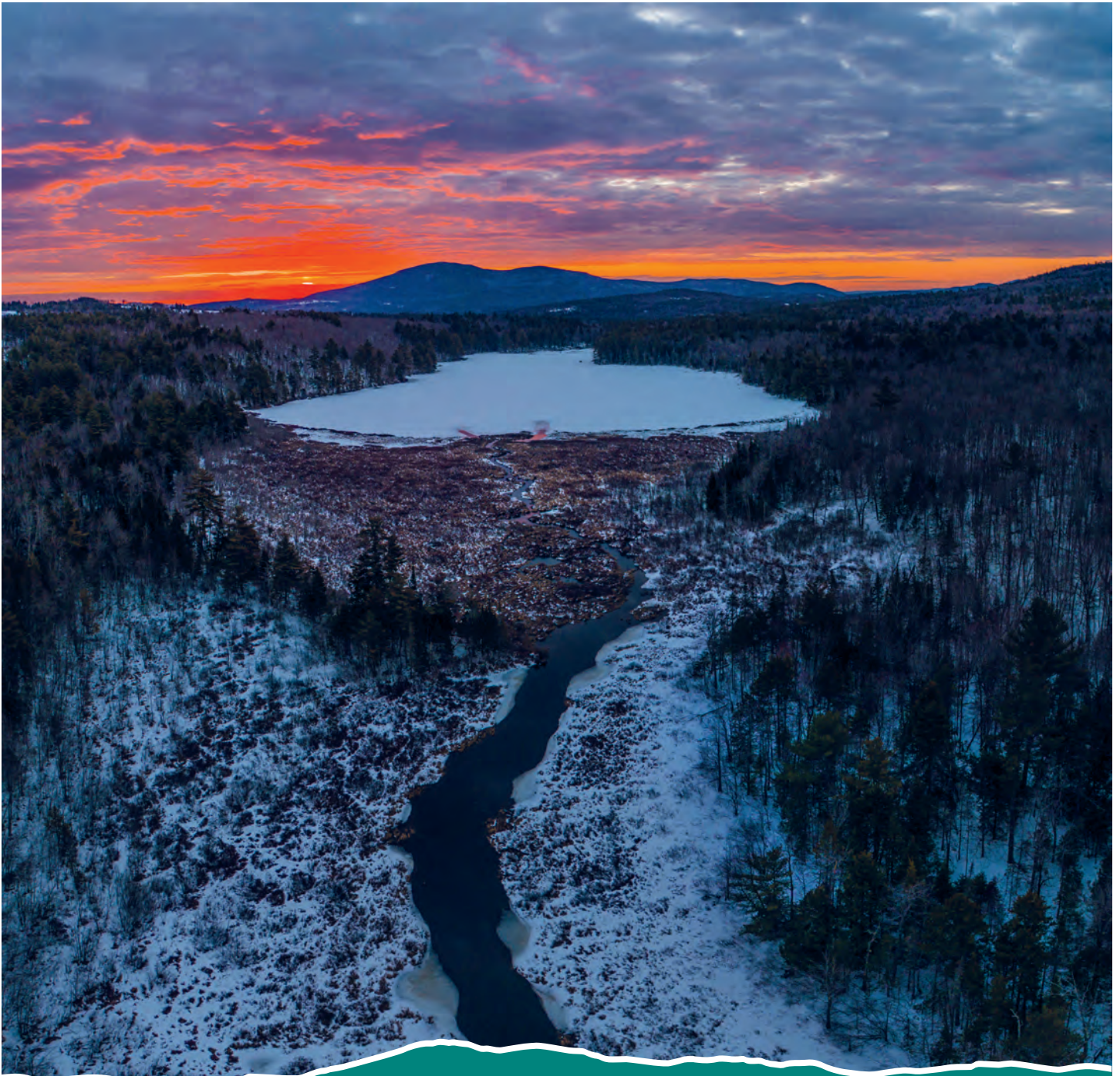
*Helping to Preserve the Rural Landscape of the Mt. Kearsarge/Ragged/Lake Sunapee Region*  
Andover, Bradford, Danbury, Goshen, Grantham, New London, Newbury, Springfield, Sunapee, Sutton, Warner & Wilmot



# Chatter



**Winter 2024**



***Listening to the Land***

## From the Executive Director:

A songbird perched on a fencepost sits astride the boundary of two properties calling out a melody. From the bird's perspective, the song radiates from the center of its world to a landscape that knows no bounds.

As our chattering bird takes wing (let's call her Phoebe), she flits past roads, shrubs, and the occasional fence. Ignoring these, she alights on a cattail growing in the marshy swale that cuts through a broad gap in an old stone wall.

This edition of the Chatter focuses on the varied ways we encounter the land, as property to buy and sell, as a source of productive natural resources, as a mix of habitats spanning forests, fields, and wetlands, and as a unique place we call home. At Ausbon Sargent, we spend a lot of time "listening to the land," and we use many methods to understand its message.

Since 1987, we have preserved nearly 5% of the land in the 12 towns we serve. That figure grows to 24% when combined with town and state-protected lands, several of which Ausbon Sargent helped secure. However, few would conclude that the preservation of the rural character of our region is assured.

Like Phoebe, the qualities we ultimately aim to preserve are unbounded by property lines. It's an uncommon property large enough to meet all the habitat requirements of a beaver colony or a moose cow and her calf. The lakes and streams we treasure are fed by every acre of their watershed whether they are paved or pristine. The farms and woodlots that give our communities character are woven into the fabric of the community, relying on people to work them, industries to serve them, and commerce to keep them afloat.

When deciding which lands merit protection, we consider both the property itself and its significance to the larger landscape.

In this issue, Kristy Heath, the editor of *Chatter*, recalls listening to the land through a child's eyes growing up in rural Grantham. Andy Deegan, our Land Protection Specialist, describes the tools he uses to evaluate a site's unique attributes for conservation. Stewardship Manager, Anne Payeur, takes us on a walk through the forest in winter to search out its stories in the snow. Glennie LeBaron, our Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator, recounts the work our volunteers do to make our lands welcoming to visitors, two-footed and otherwise.

We are pleased to have two guest writers in this issue of *Chatter*; Ann Davis sharing her perspective as a landowner caring for the avian habitat at the Woods Without Gile conservation easement, and Andrea Bye's perspective on starting an organic farm with her husband on the Broshek easement.

Their stories and experiences are the best assurance we have that when Phoebe returns from her winter adventures, she'll continue to fill the forest with songs of spring.



Ben Wallace



### ABOUT THE COVER >

*An aerial view of a winter-time sunrise at Clark Pond, New London.*

*Photo courtesy Peter Bloch, of EarthAerial Productions.*





# Taking a Moment to Listen

By Kristy Heath

**G**rowing up in the woods of Grantham, NH, I looked forward every summer to spending a week in a different set of woods at a camp in Meredith, NH. Looking back now, the woods were very similar; pine needles softened the ground and offered a nice place to sit, leaving sticky pitch on my clothes, skin, and sometimes (unfortunately) in my hair. I would measure the size of a tree by wrapping my arms around it to see if my hands could touch.

Fallen trees were perfect for turning into forts where, once or twice, my brother and I brought a picnic and ate in our own little “house.” Working as a family in the garden, cutting wood, and riding on my grandfather’s tractor as we cut hay were common activities in the summer. I liked the smell of the tilled garden soil, and eating fresh peas off the vine. When my dad would ask us to help with the garden or wood, promising it “won’t take but a minute” it often ended up taking longer than a minute, but was time well spent. Our land provided for us and our horses, but only because my family and the generations before us took care of it. The land was a valuable commodity, not in terms of real estate dollars, but for filling our root cellar with the veggies my mother spent hours canning, loading our barn’s loft with sweet-smelling bales of hay, and for keeping our wood box full for the winter. The woods and the outdoors at home were familiar and part of growing up in rural New Hampshire.

It wasn’t until I went to camp and sat in someone else’s woods that I heard the land speak. What probably started out as a counselor’s ploy to keep a bunch of fourth-graders quiet for a half hour, turned into a wonderful exercise that made each of us feel at home in the

woods. We were asked to walk out into the forest and find our own spot to sit, where we couldn’t see anyone else. There was no talking allowed; we were to sit and listen. After the shuffling of bodies and intermittent giggling stopped, the magic began. Dappled light filtered through the canopy above us, providing a calming effect. Bird songs echoed back and forth in dialogue. Chipmunks revealed themselves and scurried off to wherever they were headed before we came and scared them into hiding. The first time we sat quietly, I noticed a Daddy Longlegs had crawled onto my leg and I swatted it away quickly in fear. By the third day, I watched as another of the same species inched its way from the forest floor onto my hand; I let it continue its journey, fascinated by how it moved and wondered where it was going. Each day after lunch and before our afternoon activity, our group looked forward to this time to connect and just “listen.”

The special places we protect offer these same opportunities to assimilate into nature. When was the last time you went into the woods, sat quietly, and just listened? The land has so much to say and even more to offer. The health benefits are numerous, not only for providing places to recreate and move, but also for centering oneself and reconnecting with nature. The next time you are feeling overwhelmed, find a small spot in the woods, away from anyone else. Open your eyes and ears to the land; you may be surprised to hear what it says.



*Looking up at a beautiful tree on the Old College Road Preserve in Andover, NH.*

*Kristy has been with the Land Trust for almost 9 years and serves as the Development and Communications Coordinator. She is the mom to three daughters and a Shih-Tzu named Happy. In her free time, Kristy likes to travel, camp with family and friends, and partake in summer and winter activities in and around the region. A NH native, she currently resides in New London.*



*Members of the Ausbon Sargent Board pose outside of the New London Historical Society's Meeting House following the 36th Annual Meeting*



*New members of the Ausbon Sargent Board (L-R) Jim Owers, Lexi Garcia, Robin Albing*

## Annual Meeting Recap

On Sunday, October 22nd, Ausbon Sargent staff, trustees and members joined together at the Meeting House of the New London Historical Society to hold the 36th Annual Meeting of the Land Trust. Board and staff members were introduced, volunteers were thanked for their important service hours, and the minutes were accepted from the 2022 Annual Meeting. Presentations were provided by the Treasurer, the Investment Committee, and the Chair, Lisa Andrews. New Executive Director, Ben Wallace, gave a slideshow presentation explaining the land projects completed over the last year, upcoming projects, and what Ausbon Sargent has been doing to follow its strategic plan. Land Protection Specialist, Andy Deegan, was recognized for his 15 years of service to the Land Trust. Other recognized individuals were Jeff Hollinger and Ginny Gwynn, who were retiring from the Ausbon Sargent Board after serving for six years.

Incoming members of the Board are Robin Albing, Lexi Garcia, and past board member, Jim Owers. All three were voted in unanimously. The slate of officers to the board, accepted by unanimous vote of the membership included: Lisa Andrews (Chair), Bob Zeller (Vice-Chair), Mike Quinn (Treasurer), and Susan Ellison (Secretary).



## Meet Our New Trustees

Three new Trustees joined the Ausbon Sargent Board at the Annual Meeting in October. Here's a little bit about them:

Robin Albing is a resident of New London and lives on Little Lake Sunapee with her husband Don. She received her MBA from the Amos Tuck School of Dartmouth College and presently works as the Executive Director of Lifelong Learning and Advancement Special Projects at Dartmouth College. She has had a lengthy career in marketing and consulting and brings some great experience to Ausbon Sargent!

Lexi Garcia grew up in New London, attended Kearsarge schools, worked at Spring Ledge Farm in the summers, and recently returned as a full-time resident. She received her BA in Neuroscience, Anthropology and Sociology from Middlebury College, and her MS in Conservation Biology & Sustainable Development from the University of Maryland, College Park. She has spent time teaching middle and high school science, and was part of a tissue engineering start-up for five years, creating large-scale manufacture of engineered tissues and tissue-related products. She and her husband Juan are parents to two active children, and Lexi sits on the Outing Club board, and coaches soccer, basketball, track and lacrosse. Ausbon Sargent looks forward to Lexi's interest in supporting opportunities for community involvement and awareness!

Jim Owers is a past board member who retired a year ago after serving as Secretary, and Chair of both the Lands and Stewardship committees. He is a resident of Concord, NH and has been a seasonal resident of Sunapee since 2005. Jim has a BA from Beloit College and his J.D. from Cornell Law School. He retired in 2016 from Sulloway & Hollis P.L.L.C. after being a partner for 35 years. His extensive career includes practicing law in Alaska and he was Alaska's first judge appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Jim worked for the National Marine Fisheries Service and was a communications officer aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Intrepid. Jim is also a board member of the Lake Sunapee Protective Association. We are glad to have Jim back on the Ausbon Sargent Board, where he can share his expertise and institutional knowledge to help us move forward in our mission!



# Sounds Profound at the Woods Without Gile

By Ann Davis, Landowner

When my husband Marc and I were poised to retire, we decided to buy a woodlot in New Hampshire. Our goal was to find a parcel that would meet the ten criteria we sought in an ideal property, including “no road noise.” Why? We did not want the noise from vehicles to interfere with hearing natural sounds. In June 2002, we found a remote property next door to the John F. Gile Memorial State Forest – it was perfect. Because it abuts the Gile State Forest, we named the land Woods Without Gile (WWG). It also fulfilled another key characteristic on the wish list – eligible for a conservation easement. In 2007, Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust accepted our donation of the development rights on 470 acres. The easement will increase to nearly 500 acres when we add a parcel purchased in 2016.

On regular visits to the WWG, Marc and I hear a symphony of natural sounds. These range from a cacophony of bird songs to staccato drips of water to the crunch of dry leaves underfoot. In winter, the sound of silence is profound. In late spring through summer, bird songs dominate what we hear. However, this was not always the case. In fact, in August 2002, while walking the land with Paul Mulcahey, the forester who first showed us the property, I asked him why we were hearing only American Crows, Ravens, Chickadees, and Blue Jays. He said most of the “summer residents” had flown south, and most of the trees were about the same age, with a dense canopy overhead that did not provide suitable habitat for many birds. Paul suggested we could diversify habitat for wildlife by cutting trees.

Since 2004, we have harvested timber four times. In several areas, we followed up by mowing saplings with a Brontosaurus machine. These management methods created diverse ages and heights of trees – a boon to many animals. We knew we were seeing/hearing more birds. Certainly, more than the four we heard when we bought the property. But we are not scientists. We wanted to confirm that our land management benefitted wildlife. With funds from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, we hired a biologist to survey nesting birds and their habitat. In the summer of 2023, Steven Lamonde of Moosewood Ecological spent many days at our woodlot, inventorying birds by sight and song (the sound of science?) and their habitat. His initial report found 72 bird species nesting at the property. Next, we will work with Steven and our current forester, Tim Wallace, to plan a timber harvest designed to improve habitat for Wood Thrush and Eastern Wood-Pewee, two declining species of conservation concern with the greatest opportunity to benefit from habitat management at the WWG.

Steven will return in 2026 to evaluate the impact the timber harvest had on bird species at the WWG. Until then, we hope you will visit our property and hear its music for yourselves.

*Woods Without Gile was the 2022 N.H. Tree Farm of the Year. It is open to passive recreation. Access is via a Class VI road. Find out more about this property at [ausbonsargent.org](http://ausbonsargent.org).*



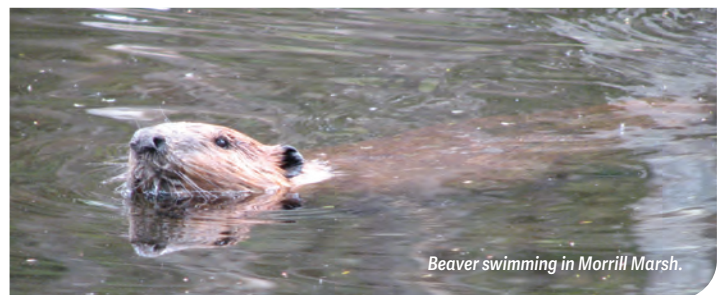
Marc Davis mowing Morrill Meadow.



Ann Davis at the Morrill Meadow with Morrill Marsh and Ragged Mountain in the distance.



Pine Warbler.  
Courtesy, Jonathan Schwartz



Beaver swimming in Morrill Marsh.

# Listening to the Land in Winter

By Anne Payeur

When you think of a land manager listening to the land, you probably think of someone going out and evaluating timber, taking an inventory of water resources, and noting different habitats, and you're not wrong. But did you know that sometimes we go out and literally listen to the land?

As we walk properties for conservation, we listen. We listen to the wildlife, streams running, livestock, and sometimes equipment humming like tractors harvesting hay. Winter offers quiet like no other time of year. With the snow aiding in a hush over the forest, you can hear brooks babbling further in the distance, winter birds jumping from branch to branch, and you may even be able to hear larger animals moving through the brush. The snow creates this beautiful white backdrop in which it's easier to spot wildlife enjoying a meal or track them through the snow.

Snow gives land managers a great tool for measuring wildlife diversity on conserved lands. Animals you may never spot are easier to track in the snow. Tracks from deer, moose, turkeys, and bears are usually easy to distinguish in the mud, but mice, fisher, bobcats, foxes, otters, and other more stealthy animals' tracks are more easily observed in the snow.

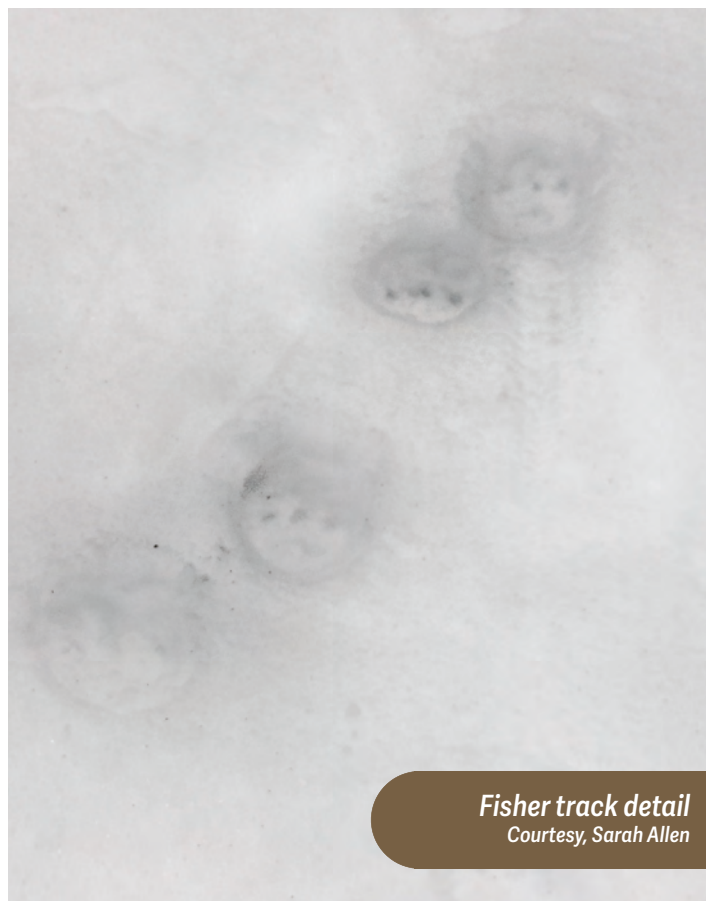
Observing each of our conserved lands in the winter and seeing different animal tracks hints at the unseen story. We can gain a better understanding of how wildlife use properties and take this into account when making management decisions. For instance, tracks in the snow can show us paths animals frequently walk that we may want to avoid for trails or recreation, to minimize human impacts on wildlife. Tracks can also show us places animals are resting, bedding down, and spending longer periods of time. These areas may be preserved during forest management activities, and nearby patches may be created to encourage future foraging areas.

The next time you take out your snowshoes or skis and head out into the forest, be sure to take a moment to listen. Enjoy the quiet that is winter while it's here and then spend some time looking down to see who else has been enjoying the snow and quiet the winter offers us all.

*Anne has been with Ausbon Sargent for almost four years as the Stewardship Manager. She oversees the monitoring of conservation easement properties, as well as the management of properties owned by Ausbon Sargent. Anne and her husband, Hunter, live in Boscawen with their son.*



**Deer bed and track**  
Courtesy, Laurie Buchar



**Fisher track detail**  
Courtesy, Sarah Allen





*A recent site visit to a property in the early stages of conservation.*

## *Is Your Land Suited for Conservation?*

*By Andy Deegan*

When we approach landowners about conserving their land, we're sometimes told that they did not believe their land was worthy of conservation; that it's not large enough or as special as others that have been conserved in the past. The truth is that we look at many different criteria to determine if a property is suitable for conservation. Each property is unique, and many are good candidates for conservation.

When landowners approach us, interested in obtaining more information on conserving their land, we start by asking them about their goals in protecting their property. Goals can vary from protecting land that has a special significance, to obtaining a tax deduction. Landowner goals can help us determine whether and how to go forward with the project. In some cases, if a landowner insists on retaining rights that are inconsistent with conservation, we may decide not to go forward with a project.

After initial conversations with the landowner, the next step is to arrange a site visit to the property. Prior to the site visit, Ausbon Sargent staff will review resource layers using ArcGIS mapping software to determine the various resources that could be protected with a conservation easement. Some of these resources may include valuable forestry or agricultural soils, water resources, critical wildlife habitat, uncommon plants, animals, or natural communities, and the property's proximity to other conserved land. For us to approve a land conservation project, we must be able to demonstrate a "public benefit," and protection of valuable resources is one type of public benefit.

A site visit allows Ausbon Sargent staff and members of the Land Protection Committee to see the condition and resources of the land first-hand. Our Land Protection Committee is made up of 14 volunteers from many different backgrounds, who review each potential conservation project on its merits to determine whether it is a good candidate for protection.

The Committee and staff consider the following: Does the land have trails that are open to the public? Does it have scenic views, protect significant road frontage, or the shoreline of a water body? During the site visit, the past land management history of the property, the presence of any structures, or sources of contamination (old dumps, spill sites, etc.) are observed. There are a lot of different ways that conserving land can provide a public benefit, but each project must meet this benchmark in some way.

Following the site visit, all the data about the land, the goals of the landowner, and the interest of the town are compiled into a report that is presented to the full Land Protection Committee. The Land Protection Specialist will also communicate with the Stewardship Manager about concerns they might have with the permanent stewardship of the property. If the Committee determines the property is important for conservation, the project is presented to Ausbon Sargent's Board of Trustees with a recommendation for approval. If the Board votes to approve the project, the process of conserving the property can officially begin.

While the process for protecting a piece of land is slightly different for each property, since each property and its owner are unique, the basic steps remain consistent. We are always happy to talk about the process with landowners at any time. Please give us a call if you are interested in talking about your land!

*Andy Deegan has been a Land Preservation Specialist with Ausbon Sargent since 2008 and celebrated 15 years with the Land Trust in May. He lives in New London with his wife and two children. In his free time, he enjoys birding, kayaking, hiking, and generally being outside.*



# Thank You For Special Donations

The end date for gifts represented here is through 12/31/2023. If you have a question or correction, please contact Jen Deasy at [info@ausbonsargent.org](mailto:info@ausbonsargent.org) or 603-526-6555. You will see our Membership, Annual Fund, and Business Partner lists in the summer issue!

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Christopher & Jennifer Fore  
John B. Garvey Trust  
Frank H. Gordon^ & Dorothy B. Gordon^  
Dr. Lincoln Gordon^  
Town of Grantham  
John Graves^, Cordelia F. Graves^ Revocable Trust

Green Crow Corporation  
Donna Vilsmeier & Russell, Donald^, Raymond & Richard Gross  
Cynthia W. Hayes & John Trachy  
Gerald E. Hersey  
Roger Hersey^  
Lisa Hess  
Edwin R. Hiller  
Beatrice Jillette  
Hazel Johnson^  
Jolyon Johnson  
Thaddeus C.^ & Virginia D. Johnson  
Cora Collins Kangas  
Kezar Conservation Group, LLC  
King Ridge, LLC, Frank Stewart  
Knight's Hill Nature Park  
Nelson F. Lebo III  
LEJ Revocable Trust  
Mark Lennon  
David^ & Mary MacMillin  
Brooks McCandlish & Janet Sillars  
J. Dale McLeod Company  
Monetta Properties, Inc.  
Nelson Farm  
Newcomb & Ourusoff Families "Kentlands"  
New England Forestry Foundation  
Town of New London  
New London Outing Club

NH Audubon  
Clayton Nowell  
Nutting Family Trust  
Judith M. Oates  
Robert O'Neil Revocable Trust  
Otter Pond Protective Association  
Dr. Edward C. Parkhurst^ & Loren B. Sjostrom^  
Dr.^ & Mrs.^ Edward C. Parkhurst  
Malcolm^, Dallas^ & Mabel^ Patten  
Thomas & Janet Paul  
Pelfor Corporation  
Alice Perry  
Mrs. Bessie W. Phillips^  
Pine Summit, LLC  
Robert Poh  
Timothy Poh  
Gerald R. Putnam  
Ring Brook  
Barbara & David Roby  
Rachel & Myron^ Rosenblum  
Janice W. Sahler Trust  
Rachel^ & Murray^ Sargent  
Sharon & Duffy Sheehan  
Patricia Sorento  
Ralph^ & Mary Lou Spofford  
Stanley Farm Association  
Stanley Point Trust  
Star Lake Properties, Inc.  
Robert Stevens^  
Linford E. & Mary Ellin Stiles

Bill & Betty Stockwell  
Sandy Sonnichsen & Allen Howe  
Town of Sunapee  
Town of Sutton  
Kit & Nancy Tatum  
Libby Trayner^ Trust  
V-Oz Asset Management Co., LLC, Van O. Webb  
R.H. Webb Forest Preserve, LLC, Van O. Webb  
Daniel H. Wolf Trust  
Woods Without Gile  
Marcia Wright  
Sarah Yerkes  
Marjorie Young^  
Steven^ & Susan Youngs

*^ denotes deceased*



# Thank You!

# Tales from the Trails

By Glennie LeBaron



Volunteer Seth Benowitz installs a sign at the Bradford Bog Headwaters property.

This fall, we welcomed eager participants to the inaugural guided hike on the Bradford Bog Headwaters property. Looking up the steep slope beyond young plants and trees, the oaks and maples on the ridgeline were starting to transition into vibrant fall colors. For some, this was their first visit to the property. Others had been supporting this protected property since before it closed in June of 2023. There can be many moving parts before a large group joins Ausbon Sargent on a guided hike, like this one at Bradford Bog Headwaters this past fall.

First on the agenda was planning and building a trail. Aided by volunteers this summer, we trudged through young trees, got pricked by blackberries, and found ourselves knee-high in water. Our explorations often left us sweaty and disoriented, but we were nevertheless excited from spying bear scat, deer scrapes, and rare plants. Despite varied routes, we always made sure there was access to the view from the ridgeline, knowing it would make a special destination for visitors. Mindful of preserving the ecosystem and the unique water resources in this space, we created a sustainable trail, constructed by over a dozen volunteers. The half mile trail came to life just in time for the September hike.

When planning a theme for a guided hike, this firsthand experience in exploring the property and crafting the trails allows me to highlight unique aspects of a property, while still

leaving space for visitors to see the entire landscape in new ways. Bradford Bog Headwaters is young in many senses of the word. In addition to being new to Ausbon Sargent, much of the property is still in the early stages of growth after a timber harvest. I strived to highlight the dynamic nature of this young landscape—where blackberries sustain bears, tall grasses shield deer, and edge habitats are perfect for avian life. I marveled at the future of the forest—while we gazed at Haystack and Lovewell Mountains, I reminded our group that, as this forest grows, the critters it supports will change, and eventually visitors may lose the view as young trees mature into adulthood.

Many local partners contributed to the public programming for Ausbon Sargent this summer and fall. In the past six months, over 150 participants have joined our programs on ten properties across seven towns. As the first Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator, this has been an excellent change to intentionally think about bridging the gap between the ongoing stewardship and management of protected properties, and the act of connecting people to these special places.

This position has been a great chance—not just to listen to the land as I plan guided hikes, but for us as an organization to listen to our growth and recognize the new needs, capacities, and opportunities that emerge with growth. I hope I see some of you at our winter and spring events, or that you try some of the DIY snowshoes in the coming winter months.

*Glennie LeBaron started volunteering with Ausbon Sargent in 2020, returning as an intern in 2021 and 2022. She began as the Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator in May of 2023 after graduating from Brown University. Glennie is delighted to be using her degree while continuing to learn in her role with Ausbon Sargent. You can find her and her dog on the trails any time of year.*



An excellent view from the end of the newly constructed trail of the Bradford Bog Headwaters property.





*A delectable assortment of food!*

## Holiday Party at The Livery

Ausbon Sargent board and staff were thrilled to finally gather in person for the annual Holiday Party after three years without doing so. A new venue was selected to take advantage of the wonderful and historic Livery in Sunapee Harbor. Over 100 members attended the sold-out event, and the space was brimming with smiling faces, lively conversation, and delicious food and drink. As one member offered, "The Ausbon Sargent Holiday Party is the true kick-off to the Holiday Season!" We couldn't agree more. Ausbon Sargent gives special thanks to our sponsor for this event, Ledyard Bank, and was delighted to work with the staff at The Livery and the Jackson & Dow Catering company to make the party a memorable evening for all.



*Members of Ausbon Sargent's Special Events Committee were on hand to help guests feel most welcome. L-R: Kathleen Belko, Heidi Saghir, Lyn Hopkins, Laura Beth Foster, Betsy Lyons, Lynn Mountford  
Missing: Debbie Chrisman, Joan Gould*

## Staff Represents Ausbon Sargent at National Land Trust Alliance Conference

In September, staff members Kristy Heath (Development and Communications Coordinator) and Jen Deasy (Operations Manager) traveled to Portland, OR, to take part in the National Land Trust Alliance's conference, otherwise known as "Rally." This year's Rally proved to be a popular place to be, with over 2,200 people in attendance, the most ever for this event. In addition to attending workshops with topics ranging from fundraising and marketing to real estate fundamentals and preparing for accreditation renewal, there was an opportunity to network with other individuals from land trusts both near to and far from Ausbon Sargent's 12-town region. It was also a time to reflect upon the things already being done at the Land Trust, and an opportunity to look forward to new and different goals for the future. It is important to get "out of the box" sometimes and realize that the world of conservation and land trusts is enormous, but we all have similar ideas about how to continue our good work and protect the important, special places we love. The sharing of experiences and ideas is a big part of Rally, and one of the most important reasons we attend.



*Jen Deasy and Kristy Heath at the National Land Trust Alliance Rally in Portland, OR*





*A view from the Brewer conservation easement in Danbury*

## Town Spotlight

Ausbon Sargent serves 12 towns that make up our Mt. Kearsarge/Ragged/Lake Sunapee Region, including Andover, Bradford, Danbury, Goshen, Grantham, New London, Newbury, Springfield, Sunapee, Sutton, Warner, and Wilmot. As many of our readers may be new to the area or perhaps unfamiliar with the surrounding towns, each upcoming issue will feature a spotlight on a town and its conservation history with our land trust. For many more details on properties we have protected in each town, please visit the Ausbon Sargent website and click on the “properties” section. From there you can choose to learn more about a property by name or search an entire town to see what has been protected there.

### Town of Danbury

Danbury was incorporated in 1795. Originally part of the Town of Alexandria, a group of residents petitioned the State Legislature to separate Alexandria into two towns, due to the inconvenience of having a mountain divide the town, making it difficult for all residents to gather in a single space.

The name “Danbury” was suggested by a settler from Danbury, Connecticut. Later, more land was added to the town from Hill and Wilmot.

### Danbury:

- Has an estimated population of about 1,300 people.
- Is 37.8 square miles in size, with 0.3 square miles of inland water area.
- Is home to the villages of: Elmwood, Fords Crossing, Fords Mill, South Danbury, and Converse Station.
- Is home to Ragged Mountain, Danbury North Road Schoolhouse Museum, and part of the Northern Rail Trail.

### Protected Land in Danbury:

- Four Ausbon Sargent conservation easements make up 495.2 acres (roughly 2% of the town).
- Other lands in Danbury are protected through State, Municipal, and private easements/agreements.

### Stewardship Wish List

*Each year, Ausbon Sargent is required to monitor over 160 protected properties, including land we own and land on which we hold easements. Along with monitoring, we manage our own properties and trails with volunteers. Stewardship requires the use of tools and materials that either get used up annually or need replacement after years of use.*

*If you would like to help us with any items below, please send along a note with your donation or give us a call to let us know your intent. Gift certificates in any denomination to Rocky's Ace Hardware or Belletetes are also helpful to purchase tools and materials.*

**Cedar Birdhouse** for habitat enhancement \$20  
**Paint** to assist in maintaining boundaries \$100  
**Plastic Trail Markers** for maintaining trail systems \$175

*Please contact our Stewardship Manager, Anne Payeur (apayeur@ausbonsargent.org) to get details on any of the above items, or other items we may need.*

**Thank you!**



# Listening to the Land for Successful Farming and Resiliency

By Andrea Bye, Landowner

Two Mountain Farm, located at the top of Shaw Hill Road in Andover, faces Mt. Kearsarge to the West; Ragged Mountain sits on the North horizon. The farm is conserved by Ausbon Sargent via the Broshek Easement and has been an incubator opportunity for beginning farmers over the past 20 years. My husband, Anthony Munene, and I purchased the farm in 2020, after over a decade of practicing organic farming and permaculture in Kenya and New Hampshire.

We have found that one of the biggest challenges in starting a farm is finding and affording farmland itself. It is no coincidence that the farm we found to meet our farming goals and be within our means was under a conservation easement. Easements are a great tool for farm transfer and viability. The terms of the easement required the farm to be managed sustainably. For us, this matched our values, skill set, and experience. In Two Mountain Farm, we found synergy and alignment. The layout of the land includes four acres of previously farmed “cropland.” The previous owner told us that she had intensively managed the soil in one of the gardens according to Elliot Coleman’s prescribed practices. We continued to feed the soil and knew we would have the best chance of success starting our crops there, while we worked on improvements to the rest of the farm, setting up systems that will become more efficient and resilient over time.

At Two Mountain Farm, our primary goal is to manage the land for organic food production. We are working on leveraging resources to become certified organic by 2025, which first requires an organic system management plan to be written by a third party. Managing for wildlife habitat is also a goal that we feel is aligned with our purpose. Of course, there are areas of our farm where wildlife can do damage. Our goal is to create habitat for wildlife in zones where we can coexist. We recently worked with a forester and Ausbon Sargent to implement a Forestry Management Plan to accomplish this objective. Located on a steep hill, the log landing ended up being on the flat section of land abutting Plains Road, a busy intersection. We are now putting plans in place to convert the log landing into a farm stand for 2024. Our produce must be accessible, convenient, and affordable. Without community support and buy-in, farming is not sustainable. We hope that having a location on a well-commuted route will expand our customer base and fill a need for fresh food in the community.



Scenes from Two Mountain Farm: Farm sign; Cherry Tomatoes ready for the Farmers' Market; Anthony works the land with son, Liam

# Calendar of

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Please join us this winter for an outing!  
Registration is required for these free events. Please contact  
stewardship@ausbonsargent.org or call 603-526-6555.

### February 13, 2024: 11AM

(Snow date: February 27, 2024)

Guided Snowshoe at the Shadow Hill Woodlot/Hannah and Sheets Property in Sutton.

Watch for evidence of winter critters on the way to views of Mt. Kearsarge on this conservation easement.

### March 8, 2024: 10AM

(Snow date: March 30, 2024)

“Sap2Syrup Tour” at the Graves Property in Andover

Explore a sugarbush, protected by a conservation easement, then head down the road to “Trail Side Sugar House” for a live syrup-making demonstration.

**Adult Instructional Series:** Butterfly Training for the Lake Sunapee Region Butterfly Club

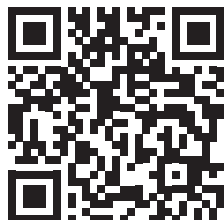
Every 3rd Thursday from January 18 through May 16th, 2024 at 6PM

The Andover HUB, 157 Main Street, Andover

For more information or to sign up, contact:  
amy.highstrom@gmail.com

### CAN'T MAKE IT? TRY OUR “DIY” WINTER SERIES

Six destinations for snowshoe outings on your own time.  
Downloadable brochure and supplemental maps.  
Click on “Connect With the Land” and choose “Trails Series” from the drop-down menu. Or scan here:



## A Fond Memory Shared

It always brings a smile to our faces when we hear from members or friends of Ausbon Sargent, regarding how the Land Trust has helped to preserve a property or an area through conservation easements, especially if they are places where core memories of their childhoods were built. These stories serve as a nod to the organization to keep going; that our work matters to the past generations and those to come, in addition to the wildlife and natural resources we strive to protect. A testimonial we received several months ago referenced both Star Lake and Dutchman's Pond in Springfield, and Pleasant Lake in Elkins – all of which have been touched by the protection of conservation easements.

*“Growing up on Pleasant Lake, I was a very keen fisher. When we moved to our new home on Bunker Road in 1950, I started to do a lot of trolling for salmon. That year and maybe several more, there had been small salmon reared in Star Lake. These were angled out (probably by Elkins Fish & Game Club members) and transported to stock Pleasant Lake. Most were in lower teens in length, but I had a wonderful time catching and releasing the undersized ones and keeping the odd legal one. We caught these salmon for a few years as they got larger (I had several in the four-to-seven-pound range).*

*Although I don't remember visiting Star Lake (unlike Dutchman's Pond, which I fished with my father), it brings back fond memories. Keep up the good work.”* - Harold “Buster” Welch, Manitoba, Canada.

The 1,612-acre “Star Lake Farm” property (including the 65-acre Star Lake, which is not open to the public) was protected through Ausbon Sargent conservation easements in 2010 and 2011. Pleasant Lake is protected in part by the Oates property, which protects Turtle Cove, an important wildlife and recreational area at the head of the lake. This two-acre property is adjacent to the 28-acre Rachel and Murray Sargent conservation easement. This undeveloped parcel along the shoreline provides a beautiful view of the lake for those traveling along Lakeshore Drive. Dutchman's Pond is close in proximity to the Star Lake property, and several of the lands surrounding it are protected through municipal, state, and quasi-public conservation easements. So, although not protected directly by any Ausbon Sargent easements, it is reassuring to see that landowners are becoming aware that protecting bodies of water can be achieved through the protection of their surrounding lands. Without these measures, the thrill of “catching a big one” (or even those smaller ones), will be lost for future generations.

If you have a story or memory that involves one of the special places that has been protected by an Ausbon Sargent conservation easement, please share it with us at [kheath@ausbonsargent.org](mailto:kheath@ausbonsargent.org). We love to hear how our work has helped to maintain the magic that only rural character can provide.



# A Dedication to Nancy Lyon

By Kristy Heath

It has been twelve years since one of Ausbon Sargent's most remarkable, creative, and selfless volunteers passed away. Those who knew Nancy Lyon knew her to be a "see a need, fill a need" type of person whose path in life led her to have a myriad of unique life experiences that ultimately brought her to Ausbon Sargent. Nancy had a successful career as a weaver, she trained and worked with her beloved search and rescue dogs, and she was also a talented graphic designer.

In 1996, Nancy approached Executive Director Debbie Stanley to offer her skills as a graphic designer on a volunteer basis. It was evident to her that the Land Trust, a vibrant and growing organization, needed someone to fill this role. This began Nancy's 15-year stint as a volunteer where she poured herself into the growing needs of Ausbon Sargent. Besides creating all the Land Trust's public relations pieces, including land project flyers, ads, fundraising materials, and the Chatter newsletter, Nancy also spearheaded the creation of the first Ausbon Sargent website in 2000. Nancy lent her strong leadership skills and steadfast commitment to Ausbon Sargent by serving for nine years on the Ausbon Sargent Board, including one year as Chair. She had a love of the land, the open spaces, and the organization that worked to keep the special places special.

Following a recent bequest to the Land Trust on behalf of Nancy, the Ausbon Sargent Board approved the dedication of its office building in her name. Very soon, a sign signifying the "Nancy Chase Lyon Building" will adorn our office at 71 Pleasant Street in New London. Nancy, who coined the phrase "Living Legacy," has most certainly put her mark on this organization. Her living legacy will remind us of the importance of what Ausbon Sargent stands for and will help to perpetuate our continued good work and thoughtful protection of this region's most treasured landscapes.



Nancy and two of her Search and Rescue "girls"



*The individuals listed below have notified us that they have provided for Ausbon Sargent in their estate plans.*

Rita & James Abbott<sup>^</sup>  
Anonymous (13)  
Rich & Heidi Anderson  
Sue Ellen Andrews  
Theodore Bacon, Jr.<sup>^</sup>  
Kathy & David Bashaw  
David & Brenda Beardsley  
Ann Bemis<sup>^</sup>  
Seth Benowitz  
Marla Binzel  
Peter Bloch & Kathy Lowe Bloch  
Catherine Bogardus<sup>^</sup>  
Robert & Sandra Brown  
David & Pamela Carle  
Roland Carreker<sup>^</sup>  
Michael & Susan Chiarella  
Naia Conrad<sup>^</sup>  
Emma Crane  
Chris & Janice Cundey  
Rick Davies  
Ann & Marc Davis  
Tim & Lorraine Davis  
Anne Dewey<sup>^</sup>  
Laurie & Joe<sup>^</sup> DiClerico  
Neil Donnenfeld  
Barbara Faughnan  
John & Maggie Ford  
John Garvey & Cotton Cleveland  
Gerald & Jane Gold  
George Green<sup>^</sup>  
Martha J Harris  
Thomas & Marilyn Hill  
Alan Jones<sup>^</sup>

Dr. Charles Kane<sup>^</sup>  
David Karrick  
Betsy Lee<sup>^</sup>  
Doug & Nancy Lyon<sup>^</sup>  
Andrew J. McDonald<sup>^</sup>  
Genevieve Millar<sup>^</sup>  
Dave & Bev Payne  
Alan Peterson  
Rachel & Myron<sup>^</sup> Rosenblum  
Murray & Rachel Sargent<sup>^</sup>  
John & Sage Scott  
Robert Silvia  
Nancy Denny Solodar  
& John Solodar  
Virginia Anthony Soule<sup>^</sup>  
Deborah & Peter Stanley  
Nathaniel Stevens  
Pat Thornton<sup>^</sup>  
John Tilson  
Libby Trayner<sup>^</sup>  
Eric Unger<sup>^</sup>  
Betsy Denny Warner  
Mary-Seymour "Sissy"  
Wastcoat<sup>^</sup>  
Ruth White<sup>^</sup>

<sup>^</sup>denotes deceased

*If the Land Trust is named in your estate plan or if you would like to discuss a possible bequest, please let us know.*

*You may contact our Executive Director, Ben Wallace, at 603-526-6555 or email [bwallace@ausbonsargent.org](mailto:bwallace@ausbonsargent.org).*

*Those that prefer not to be recognized can remain anonymous.*



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*(From left to right)*

**Susie Moore,**  
Bookkeeper

**Glennie LeBaron**  
Stewardship & Outreach  
Coordinator

**Andy Deegan**  
Land Protection Specialist

**Jen Deasy**  
Operations Manager

**Kristy Heath**  
Development &  
Communications Coordinator

**Anne Payeur**  
Stewardship Manager

**Ben Wallace**  
Executive Director



*Special Thanks to all of our guest authors!*

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Won't you join us and become part of the living legacy created through land conservation?

You can find out more about us on our website at: [ausbonsargent.org](http://ausbonsargent.org)

Please make checks payable to: **Ausbon Sargent** and mail to: **P.O. Box 2040, New London, NH 03257-2040**  
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