

A Poem

Hold Up

Each work morning about seven
Out of the barn again I'm rolling.
I'm just warming up to the idea of work,
And today on NPR

Someone, somewhere, is already fighting
A stubborn ten percent unemployment rate
When I see Henry's cows are out
On the road side of the fence.
One big one's in park by the barn.

As I swoop down between Henry's fields,
The wild turkeys are crossing again.
Some already over,
Some milling back in continual nod.
And their crossing guard
Has part of the road waiting.

I slow my glide
And thread myself by,
It giving me the nod and waddle.
They are all so hidden in their ugliness—
Oily, prehistoric, in yesterday's clothes—
Their stomach carbonations bubbling up.

Perhaps if I lowered my window
You'd remember my name.

~Dennis Pollack

HILLTOWN LAND TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Katharine Baker
413-268-7572
Jennifer @ Lincoln Fish
413-268-3288
Wil Hastings
413-584-4957
Mary A. Koncel
413-238-4221
Susan McIntosh
413-667-8893
James Molyneaux
413-238-5547
Ruth Pardoe
413-667-3118
Jeff Penn
413-667-5230
Thomas Quinn
413-238-5850
Jesse Robertson-Dubois
413-296-0310
Wendy Sweetser
413-695-2226
Spencer Timm
413-296-8053
Richard Tracy
413-527-5440
Waino Tuominen
413-667-8838
Eric Weber
413-268-3160
Shirley S. Winer
413-667-3439

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #TK
NORTHAMPTON, MA
01060



PO Box 251
Chesterfield, MA 01012

THE HILLTOWN LAND TRUST MISSION STATEMENT:

- To conserve active farmland and other 'working' properties;
- To save native plant and wildlife habitats;
- To protect watersheds;
- To preserve the scenic and rural character of the Hilltowns.

The Hilltown Land Trust recognizes that our towns must balance their need to create new housing and jobs with their need to preserve critical natural resources and their rural character. We're committed to being an important participant in this endeavor.



NEWS

CHESTERFIELD, CUMMINGTON, GOSHEN, HUNTINGTON, MIDDLEFIELD, PLAINFIELD, WESTHAMPTON, WILLIAMSBURG, AND WORTHINGTON

HLT Board Member Completes Keystone Project Workshop

As a member of the Huntington Conservation Commission, I had heard about Coverts (now called the Keystone Project) for several years. The focus of the program is forest management, and since I don't have a forest to manage, I assumed I was not eligible to participate in their workshop. But one day, Paul Catanzaro, a Forest Resource Specialist I had known back when he was the Service Forester for our region, suggested I apply. As a result, during the last weekend this past April, I spent three exhausting and exhilarating days at the Harvard Forest, learning a lot about forests and wildlife.

Organized by the UMass Department of Natural Resources Conservation and UMass Extension, the Keystone Project began in 1988. Since then, nearly 300 people have completed the three-day training workshop. In exchange for room, board, workshops, and reference materials, we agree to return to our communities to educate our neighbors about and encourage interest in forests and wildlife conservation. This year, several of the 24 other participants were landowners, and most were also members of organizations that promote

conservation, such as land trusts, watershed associations, and conservation commissions. We spent mornings and evenings listening to excellent presentations by many experts on a variety of topics related to forest and wildlife management. For example, Jennifer Fish, Service Forester and HLT board member, explained Chapter 61 and the recent changes to the procedures for that tax law. In the afternoon, we went out into forests and fields to see what people were doing on the land.

The whole workshop was interesting. I was particularly glad to be able to talk with colleagues and landowners about their projects and experiences. I've returned to the hilltowns with some knowledge in my head and a canvas bag full of books, pamphlets, and other resources to share with people whom I encounter through conservation commissions or land trusts, or just around the neighborhood. For more information on the Keystone Project, contact Paul Catanzaro at cat@umext.umass.edu or visit the Keystone Project Website at <http://masskeystone.net/>. ♦

Susan McIntosh

Walking with Wildflowers

Mothers Day was sunny and cool this year. About 30 people showed up at HLT board member Shirley Winer's farm to see what wildflowers there were to see. For several chilly weeks, Shirley had been checking the likely spots, hoping the plants were on schedule. Biologist Molly Hale took the largest group up a steep climb to an area with lots of ephemerals and several vernal pools. Shirley took the Flatlanders on a less strenuous walk in the valley, and Joan Milam, also a biologist, stationed herself at the pond with nets, jars, books, and charts to see what she could find with the children who came. The pond yielded tadpoles, newts, and various fierce looking dragonfly nymphs, while the woods yielded some vernal pool species and an unusually lush display of flowers—perhaps due to caterpillars! In 2006, they lightened the canopy and left their fertilizer all over this area. Maybe they are good for something. Our thanks to Molly and Joan for their time and expertise. And, of course, to Shirley for welcoming us all to her farm. ♦



Trout Lilies
(Photo by Richard Chapman)

H • I • L • L • T • O • W • N

Hilltown Land Trust Poetry Reading and Raffle

Hilltown talent in all its forms was abundant at the HLT's Poetry Reading and Raffle. Despite a late winter snowstorm a few days before the event, more than 50 people filled the Worthington Historical Society on Sunday, March 18th. Featured poets for the afternoon were Colin Harrington and Stephen Philbrick of Windsor; Antonia "Toni" Lake, Patty Kimura, and Mary Beth O'Shea of Worthington; and Annie Boutelle, a long-time Chesterfield resident who now lives in Florence.

Wil Hastings, president of the HLT, opened the reading with a few words about the essential connection between the arts and the beauty of the hilltowns. Each poet then read a short selection from his/her works, which ranged from Colin's haikus and haibuns to Mary Beth's rich narratives.

"So many talented poets," said Toni, a local favorite, "and such an appreciative audience made it

a very special reading."

After a short break and some wine and cheese, the festivities continued with a raffle of artwork and crafts donated by members of the Hilltown Artisans Guild and other local craftspeople. Prizes included watercolor and oil paintings, a variety of note cards and pottery, books, and a shaker broom. Mary Beth O'Shea and Kip Porter also contributed a much-coveted hayride with their draft horses, which was won by their Worthington neighbor and poet Patti Kimura. All proceeds benefitted the HLT.

A hearty thanks to the poets and to the hilltown artists and businessfolk listed below for their generosity. Special appreciation to Karin Cook of the Hilltown Artisans Guild for collecting and organizing donations from fellow members. Please remember to support all our contributors and shop locally and often! ♦

Carol Ann Cushman, Owl Ridge Pottery, Worthington, MA

Paula Gottlieb, Cummington, MA

Linda and Steve Hamlin, Mountain Laurel Designs, Huntington, MA

Linda Siska, Linda Siska Pottery, Huntington, MA

Carol Chandler, Huntington, MA

Tania Colette, Huntington, MA

Connie Talbot, High Hollow Pottery, and Stephen Philbrick, Cummington, MA

Mary Beth O'Shea and Kip Porter, O'Shea and Porter Draft Horses, Worthington, MA

Marian and J.P. Welch, Justamere Tree Farm, Worthington, MA

Carolyn Avery, Southwick, MA

Natalie Birrell, Huntington, MA

Annette Rubino Buckley, Cummington, MA

Karin Cook, Worthington, MA

Marty Phinney, Phinney Pottery, Haydenville, MA

New HLT Trail in Huntington

Visitors to the Stevens property in Huntington will soon have a new trail to explore. On a Sunday morning in late July, five volunteers began clearing what will become a loop that begins on Pisgah Road and continues through boulder fields and around many animal dens and large trees. Eric Weber and Lincoln Fish, who marked the trail before leaf-out last spring, were joined by Sue McIntosh, Walt Wittshirk, and Shirley Winer for three hours of fairly arduous work. While Lincoln manned a chain saw, the rest of the crew made and removed smaller brush piles.

Creating this trail is another step in the development of the Stevens parcel into a managed area for recreation and ecological forestry. So far, about one-third of the trail has been cleared.

In the fall, the HLT will hold other work days to finish the project, and volunteers will be welcomed. Many thanks to Eric, Lincoln, Sue, Walt, and Shirley for their time and muscle! ♦

U • P • D • A • T • E • S

Making Art: The Hilltown Artisans Guild

One might argue that the hilltowns of western Massachusetts have more artists and craftspeople than maple trees. A bit of an exaggeration? Perhaps. But something not only attracts them to this area, but also fosters their artistic endeavors. Below, members of the Hilltown Artisan Guild offer their thoughts on the unique relationship between art and our hilltowns.

First a little history. The Hilltown Artisans Guild came into being about twenty years ago. According to Linda Siska, a Huntington potter and founding member of the Guild, one of its purposes was to provide "some connective force among hilltown artists." Equally important was creating more visibility and support for artists, as well as opportunities to show their work. Today, the Guild, which welcomes both new and professional artists and craftspeople, has 70-plus members working in a variety of media ranging from oil and water color paintings to jewelry, stick sculptures, and pottery.

For Karin Cook, a painter and long-time resident of Worthington, life in the hilltowns has clearly influenced both her subject matter and her sensibilities. Before she moved to Worthington, Karin characterized her paintings as abstract or protest art. Now, however, her delicately rendered watercolors more often than not are rural landscapes unique to this area. Karin believes her work, as well as that of other Guild members, "says something about the hilltowns and helps people be more conscious of what's here in the hilltowns." In return, she says "people are more open to a painting when they can recognize the site."

On the other hand, the gift of quietude, or a "safe, away place from the mainstream," is what Linda especially values about life in the hilltowns. She firmly believes the hilltowns—with their

open spaces and slower pace—provide the serene, distraction-free setting that encourages "artists to tuck themselves away in their studios and make blocks of time to do their art."

Like Karin, though, Linda also acknowledges that her surroundings are an inescapable and sometimes unexpected force in her art and thinking about art. She offered the following example. This fall, in addition to making pottery, she's teaching a course on design fundamentals at Westfield State College. Often, Linda explained, while considering how to explain line to her students, she found herself walking on nearby dirt roads. Looking at those roads and the pine needles on them gave her not only insights into the concept of line but also a new embossing technique for her pottery.

Then there's metal sculptor James Kitchen and, as he refers to it on his business card, his "oddly compelling art." "Because all of my sculptures are found objects, my art is connected as much as possible to the hilltowns," he explains. Although his home and studio are in Chesterfield, he finds the farm implements, car parts, and metal scraps used to create his sculptures—which range from 2 feet to 20 feet tall—in all corners of the hilltowns. "A pile of old junk is heaven for me," James says. Besides being an artist, he sees himself as "part historian and part archeologist." Frequently at fairs, he says, farmers recognize an old piece of equipment in one of his sculptures, which usually leads them to some interesting reminiscing about farming and their lives—another benefit of being an artist in the hilltowns.

Like the Hilltown Land Trust, our artisans help us conserve a sense of our history and rural life. Interested in more information about the Hilltown Artisans Guild? Contact Karin Cook at 238-5827. ♦

JOIN US

IF YOU SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE HILLTOWN LAND TRUST,
ASK A FRIEND OR TWO OR THREE TO JOIN US.
OR, BETTER YET, GIVE THEM THE GIFT OF A MEMBERSHIP
TO THE HILLTOWN LAND TRUST.

- \$35 PER YEAR
(OUR BASIC "LAND LOVER")
- \$50 PER YEAR
- \$100 PER YEAR
- \$500 PER YEAR
- \$ _____ (OTHER) PER YEAR

HILLTOWN LAND TRUST P.O. BOX 251 CHESTERFIELD, MA 01012
THANK YOU!