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Photo: Kerry Hardy



SOMETHING TRULY SPECIAL

A Collaboration for a Common Cause

There are brief periods of time in life when you realize, in the midst of the moment, that you are experiencing something truly special. I felt this way in August, during a coastal clean up on Green's Island in which Vinalhaven Land Trust partnered with The Rozalia Project, Outward Bound, Hurricane Island, the Town of Vinalhaven and the Mars Corporation.

of this newsletter. Inside you will see how we've worked together with Partners in Island Education, the Vinalhaven School and Vinalhaven Reads to increase environmental awareness and educate kids about the importance of protecting the natural world around us. The Town has been essential in coordinating and supporting our Roadside,



Basin and Coastal clean-ups as well as in helping us resolve issues with vandalism on our preserves. Working with local fishermen, the VLT board crafted a thoughtful statement addressing the upheaval in the lobster industry, and our community. You can find this statement on our website, along with links to science-based research and resources relating to this issue.

We only cleaned a mile of shoreline, but the impact of the event, connecting people to a place, went far beyond. Six Mars Corp. employees joined fishermen, Outward Bound participants and Hurricane Island campers to scour the shore, counting and collecting debris. The power of these organizations and people coming together from around the world, in common cause, was incredible. I doubt the participants will forget the feeling of accomplishment after loading over 900 pounds of trash into boats, and I know I will never forget the connectedness we all felt, if only for a couple of hours.

We've been engaged in local conversations about sea level rise, invasives species, affordable housing, and recreational planning. VLT was delighted to fund the first phase of planning for improvements to the town's Armbrust Hill Park and to sponsor an island visit from The Gulf of Maine Research Institute to highlight their important work.



Photos by Andrea Hogan



Sometimes the work we do can feel solitary, but like the roots of trees, intertwined beneath our feet, it is our connections that underpin our successes, growth and movement along our path. As we look to the future, we are committed to developing and strengthening our relationships, within Vinalhaven and beyond. As always, we will continue to steward and protect the places that mean so much to us all.

—Andrea Hogan, Executive Director

4 Not-For-Profit Organizations

One Multinational Corporation

One Municipality

25 Volunteers

2.5 Hours

910.5 Pounds of Trash

Environmental Education News

In a digital world, it is important for children (and adults) to spend time outdoors and keep their connection to nature. With this in mind, Partners in Island Education (PIE) and VLT together created a four-day summer camp (SCAMPS) focused on being outside in the fresh air and being present in nature.

Hope Steffens and Willow Hogan led SCAMPS as co-counselors, with two sessions of campers ranging in age from five to twelve. The campers started the week exploring the woods around the school and building houses for fairies with Maisie Richards, using natural materials that they found on the forest floor. From pinecones and sticks, to found bird feathers, the kids built not only miniature houses, but grocery stores,

apartments, bookstores and even an airport so that the fairies would have an entire community. Even a stormy day couldn't stop us from connecting with the natural environment. VLT board member Yvonne Thomas visited with a cooler full of different seaweeds for the children to investigate. The campers learned all about seaweed, its parts, its color classifications, and how yummy seaweed can be. Other highlights of the camp had us searching for insects in the grass around Kelwick Farm and taking a trip out to State Beach to weave mats made of cat tail leaves with our stewards Kerry Hardy and Tom Crisp. Everyone had a blast!

With summer over and fall well underway, VLT continues to bring nature to children through

school programming. Already this school year, we have helped to fund two off-island field trips, one for the 5th and 6th grade to visit Tanglewood's overnight camp and one for the annual 8th grade Katahdin climb. These are amazing opportunities for the students to be outside, learn, and develop life skills like problem solving, collaboration and leadership. As the school year progresses, we plan to continue working closely with PIE, Tanglewood and other organizations on programs that get students outdoors and consciously connecting with nature. By fostering these experiences, students are building the foundation for a healthy lifestyle and appreciation of the outdoors.



THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP

When my mother gave everyone in my family a gift membership to Vinalhaven Land Trust, she didn't think much about it. Honestly, I didn't either. I was aware of the land trust as my family routinely hiked Perry Creek, Tip Toe, and the Basin. But that was the extent of my involvement. That all changed with her gift, because with membership came information. I received newsletters, updates, and donation appeals, and with that, I learned more about VLT, its mission, and its outreach in the community. I was suddenly in the know, whether about VLT events or when new trails—Tip Toe and Overlook, both with impressive wooden stairs, walkways, and benches—were added to the roster. I became grateful for VLT, and even more so during the pandemic when land trust trails and the outdoors were a salve, an outlet for movement and socializing.

Since that first gifted membership, my spouse and I have remained members, given every year, and so have my adult daughters. They've volunteered stuffing envelopes and painting trail blazes. It's a small act for access to Tip Toe's panoramic sunset views, swims off the granite rocks at Huber Preserve, or walks among the Dr-Suess-like lichen at Round Pond. I know my

mother didn't expect that her initial gift would hook us so hard, creating a family tradition of giving to VLT. But that's the magic of it.

VLT board member Mark Tolette had a similar experience as an adult. His parents encouraged him to join and volunteer for the Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) near their house in upstate New York. "Putting in the work of clearing brush, mowing paths through old fields, building water courses on trails and getting involved in walks and talks gave me agency, and an introduction to other volunteers," Mark said recently. Later when Mark's family became VLT members, his parents gave a donation to both VLT and TILT in his family's honor. "It was a way to encourage us to support the mission of both land trusts," he said.

People often ask, what do I get with VLT membership—essentially any donation over \$20. You don't get a mug or special access to non-existent VIP trails. What you do get is information, knowledge and community. And from there, anything can happen.

—Toria Brett and Mark Tolette

Please consider the gift of membership for a family member or friend this year.

Walks and Talks

I think we can all agree it's been a summer with lots of fog and rain and lots of Walks & Talks.

So far in 2023, we've had 44 Walks & Talks with 933 participants, an all-time high for VLT. We had over 30 volunteers leading the programs. Thank you! Bird walks were held every Thursday morning with Rick Morgan coordinating and securing the help of a flock of birders: John Drury, Allan Hayes, Pete Jaques, Suzette Jones, Cay Kendrick and Jay Manning. Evening events returned after a three-year Covid-induced hiatus and we welcomed the chance to have Phil Crossman regale us with stories.

We developed a partnership with the Grange for programs like Fireflies and Flower Pressing. We tried some new programs: Emily Lane and her lobster panel, Big Trees and Indigenous People & Places both with Kerry Hardy, and Climate Change with the Town's Sea Level Rise Committee. We brought back some old favorites: clams with Brian Beal, photography with Ron Rosenstock and geology with George Kendrick. We continued the exploration of habitats on

our preserves with our team of inspired nature nuts: Kirk Gentalen, Beth Gilford, Janet Gohres, Kerry Hardy and Amy Palmer. Maisie Richards and Hannah Noyes led the young ones into the world of fairy houses. Some of you got up early to walk the preserves with our new Executive Director, Andrea Hogan. The intrepid Banner Moffat led a snowshoe walk in March and we filled several boat trips for our annual outing to Hurricane Island. I'm now stepping into the big shoes of Jim Boone as the Chair of Walks and Talks Committee. Thanks to Jim, our leaders and participants for making 2023 such a great year for Walks & Talks! And a big thank you to Hope Steffens, our Programs and Communications Coordinator, who kept all the bits and pieces working together!

We are interested in your ideas for 2024; send your suggestions to info@vinalhavenlandtrust.org. And if you'd like to lead a program, please let us know about that too. Thanks for being such great supporters and participants of Walks and Talks!

—Claudia Dengler

Rules on Trails

No matter the season, we know that our community enjoys getting out onto VLT trails. These shared spaces are precious to all of us, and we kindly ask that you familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations of your destination before venturing out.

Some trails may have restrictions, such as no pets, because they may run through wildlife sanctuaries, have fragile soil, flora, or fauna or stretch across private property. Most of the islands surrounding Vinalhaven are not open to the public. Researching and respecting restrictions helps VLT to be a good neighbor, protecting the delicate areas of our beautiful island for future generations.

For information about the trails, preserves and sanctuaries VLT maintains visit our website (www.vinalhavenlandtrust.org), trail app (VHtrails) or office (Skoog Park) during work hours. Thank you for helping us to care for the special places within our island community.



Photo: Hope Steffens

Recognizing Our Volunteers

We are humbled by the seemingly endless generosity of VLT volunteers. At least 122 volunteers dedicated over 580 hours to Walks and Talks, summer camps, lectures, clean ups, board work and office chores. Stated simply, we could not achieve our goals without their help. We've highlighted some of this work below and apologize if we've inadvertently left anyone out.

The Mayor of Perry Creek

Each year, John McLeod and his moorings in Perry Creek introduce dozens of boating visitors to VLT and our work. We always look forward to hearing John's cheerful voice at the beginning of the season, reminding us to deliver new member packets. This year Sheri Romer Brock connected with John on a walk and brought back news of his escapades. We can't thank him enough for his steadfast ambassadorship.

Annual Meeting/Events

Getting the word out about our work and connecting with people is one of the most important activities of the year. Here are some of the people who generously facilitated events: Addison Ames mastered the tent for both Annual Meeting and SCAMPS (with help from Linnell Mather, Ryan Nizolek, Hope Steffens and Danny Ames as well!), Thank you, Steve Rosen for coolers of ice, Sherry Rega, Lucy McCarthy, Julie Dickinson and Island Spirits for refreshments. Mark Tolette, Eric Davis and Tom Crisp for set up and take down of Annual Meeting equipment and a huge thanks to Jane Arbuckle for her lovely presentation. And a special shout out to Larry Hopkins and the Lions Club rapid response tent team. Warm gratitude to Susie and David Lawrence, Ann Lane, Ruud Bergmans and Lee Campbell for hosting events at their lovely homes, and to Kitty and Peter Creighton for including information about VLT during an event at their home.

Monitoring

Volunteer monitors help us assess 2200 acres each year. Thank you to Carol Baker, Steve and Sheri Brock, Eric Davis, Claudia Dengler, Joshua Eckels, Doug Fincham, Pam and James Grumbach, Hal Holt, Cay Kendrick, Linnell Mather, Banner Moffat, Audrey Nichols, Herb Parsons, Anna Poe and Marthena Webster.

Trail Work and Cleanups

Maintaining 20 miles of trail takes a lot of work, and our volunteers are essential in helping us stay on top of it. Special thanks to Banner Moffat and Jack Carter, our trails "A" team, as well as to the Tolette and Jaques families, Steve Brock, Gillian Lobkowicz, and John and Christina Kroger.

In addition to brush and branches, maintaining our environment includes picking up trash and debris from time to time. VLT organized several events in 2023 including Basin, Roadside and Coastal clean ups. Some of the intrepid individuals who donned their gloves for these duties include: Jessica Bayer, Jim, Merry and Maisie Boone, Bobbie Carnwath, Jack Carter, Mike and Lisa Cooney, Claudia Dengler, Kevin Donovan, Doug Fincham, Pam and James Grumbach, Jackie Heger, Jim Hogan, Laura and Sarah Hop, Pam Johnson, Cay Kendrick, Dick LaCourciere, Norbert Leser, Gillian Lobkowicz, Linnell Mather, Banner Moffat, Hannah Noyes, Beth Orcutt, Diane Shirley, Mark Tolette, Joe and Mary Lou Upton, Erin Wietecma, Students and staff of Hurricane Island, Outward Bound and Mars Corporation volunteers. Special thanks to Richie Carlsen for the use of his truck.

Walks and Talks

Thanks to Jim and Merry Boone, Claudia Dengler, Beth Gilford, Janet Gohres, Norbert Leser, Banner Moffat, and Rick Morgan for their tireless work organizing 43 events this year. Our presenters, in addition to the organizers, include: Brian Beal, Sam Belknap, Phil Crossman, Kevin Donovan, Kirk Gentalen,

Allan Hayes, Pete Jaques, Suzette Jones, Cay and George Kendrick, Jonathan Labaree, Emily Lane, Jay Manning, Linnell Mather, Hannah Noyes, Dr. Avalon Owens, Amy Palmer, Maisie Richards, Ron Rosenstock, Roxanne Tolman and Carl Wilson.

Other Support

There are so many ways our friends help us throughout the year, and it would take an entire newsletter to detail every kindness. Highlights include Shannon Thompson, for her help with newsletters; Taina Litwak for developing and updating brochures; Norbert Leser for the VHTrails App wizard; Chuck Clapham and Todd and Henry Lufkin for providing planters and planter boxes to brighten our lives; Banner Moffat, trail sign maker extraordinaire; Kevin Donovan for his amazing weed whacking skills. We have received much-needed office help from Susie Lawrence, Maisie Richards, Pam and Ed Johnson, Cay Kendrick, Nancy Campbell, and Amy and Dave Calkins. In addition to our board members, committees are composed of helpful advisors as well. We are grateful to Sarah Forbes, Dick Byrd, Lousia Ives, Javier Peñalosa, Merry Boone, Rick Morgan, Pat Paquette, Pam Alley, Janet Gohres, Norbert Leser, Banner Moffat, Elise Stockly and Preble and Pete Jaques for their gifts of time and expertise.

Board Transitions

The volunteers behind it all and the VLT Board, join the staff in thanks to all who have made 2023 a vibrant and productive year. We sadly said goodbye to board members Jim Boone and Bill Jaques this year, and welcomed incoming new members Beth Gilford, Ben Iselin, Hannah Noyes, and Keeley Philbrook. Please visit the VLT website at vinalhavenlandtrust.org for board bios and tributes.

Annual meeting photo by Andrea Hogan



VOLUNTEER TODAY

If you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering with VLT, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're always thankful for community support, and when it comes to our office mailing gatherings, the more the merrier!

There are a variety of ways to contribute your time! Contact us at info@vinalhavenlandtrust.org to share your interests or to learn more about the many ways you can volunteer for VLT.

Basin clean-up photo by Andrea Hogan



Geology Walk 2023



YEAR-END GIVING

VLT operates in a calendar year basis. By sending your gifts by December 31, 2023, you can help ensure that we meet our goals for the year in order to make possible all that we do. Although gifts of all sizes are important and welcome, we are especially appreciative of leadership gifts of \$250 or more, which traditionally represents 80% of all funds raised.

You can also make a gift of appreciated securities. In addition to being able to claim a charitable income tax deduction for the full market value of the shares, you also avoid paying a capital gains tax on appreciation. You can donate by mail, phone at 207-863-2543, or securely online at vinalhavenlandtrust.org/donate. Thank you!



Snowshoe Walk 2023

President's Corner

Entering the fall of 2023 and looking back at the past year, I want to thank all our members for their support. It has been a year since Andrea Hogan started as our new Executive Director. She picked up the reins quickly, leading us through a busy and productive year, that included staff changes, new additions to our Board of Directors, and new collaborations which you can read about in this issue of the newsletter.

Now, after a busy summer event season and lots of trail use, Vinalhaven Land Trust turns its attention to environmental education programs in the school and its year-end appeal for your support. We are already planning for a new fiscal year beginning in January, and all that it promises.

The support we receive from our members makes the work of VLT possible. Your help allows for the staffing and resources to fulfill our obligation as an accredited land trust to annually monitor properties and easements; to maintain trails, to run and fund environmental education programs, and to work on a variety of collaborative projects with local organizations and the town. You, our members, are key in making all this possible and we are grateful. If you have not already done so, please renew your membership and make a contribution today.

Elizabeth Swain will take over as President of VLT in January. I will step down and serve the remainder of my term until July. After three and a half years, this is my final "President's Corner." It has been a pleasure to be a part of this strong organization.

—Lee Campbell

Welcome, Tom!

VLT'S NEW STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR

If you've been out and about on our preserves this summer, you may have noticed another person accompanying our long-time steward Kerry Hardy. This new face is our new stewardship coordinator Tom Crisp. Tom spent the past year living on Greens Island and recently moved into town. They've been working with Kerry to learn all of the ins-and-outs of stewarding our many preserves and keeping the trails hiker ready. Although following in Kerry's footsteps is a colossal endeavor, Tom is more than up for the task.

Tom is a graduate of Colby College, and serves as the director of the Maine Jung Center, a small nonprofit focused on C.G Jung's ideas and depth psychology. Tom is also a Zen practitioner, musician and folk artist.

Tom feels right at home in Vinalhaven, with its moss-covered forests and stark granite outcrops colliding with the beauty

and strength of the sea. Vinalhaven's natural beauty, in concert with the generosity of the sturdy people that makeup its year-round community, make it an ideal location to live and work. They are so excited to join the community and continue building trust and respect between all the people who love the island. As Kerry passes the stewardship mantle onto Tom, we know that we are in good hands. "It's a true pleasure to be training with a naturalist as kind, knowledgeable, and capable as Kerry," Tom said.

This bio is just a small snapshot of the personality and talent that Tom brings as the new steward for VLT. If you're interested in getting to know Tom better, the best way is to lace up your work boots and get out on the trails with them! Tom is always eager to collaborate with our dedicated volunteers!

VLT COLLABORATES WITH VINALHAVEN ARTIST



VLT is proud to announce a new collaboration with a Vinalhaven artist, Joel Philbrook. Raised on Vinalhaven and living here full time, Joel's art journey began young, kindled by his first art teacher. "Although it's been a long time since I was in that class. I remember always being excited for the next art day and loving every class." Given a sketchbook from the class, Joel filled out every single page that summer from front to back. "I still have that sketchbook today."

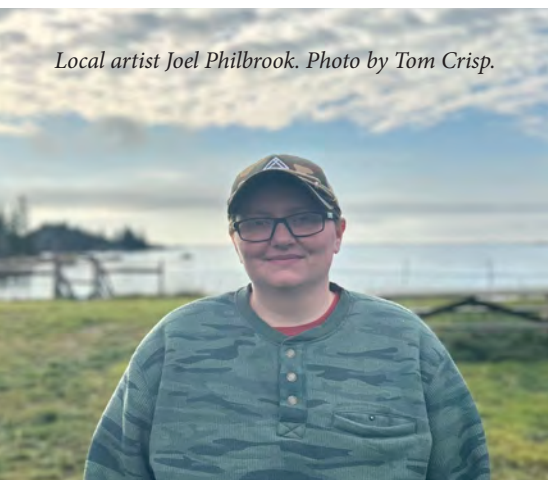
That first sketchbook was just the beginning. Today, he is passionate about art of all kinds and is inspired by the natural world, seeking to capture and portray its essence through photographs and drawings.

Joel is planning to have a busy year with upcoming projects including creating new pieces

for next year's collection to be sold at the summer flea market here on Vinalhaven, showcasing more of his art portfolio on Instagram and designing a sticker collection for us here at VLT! Our vinyl stickers, designed and printed by Joel, are inspired by the natural scenes all around us on our beloved island. His current style takes these complex landscapes and simplifies them into soft familiar shapes that evoke a playful yet soothing vista of the natural world. These stickers will be perfect for putting on your water bottles, laptop cases or anywhere you want to be reminded of the beauty of the island.

If you're interested in connecting with Joel, follow @jokaartdesign on Instagram or if you want to chat directly email at jokaartanddesign@gmail.com.

Local artist Joel Philbrook. Photo by Tom Crisp.



Who Knows Where The Time Goes?



If you're old enough to remember Sandy Denny singing those words, you're in the same boat as me: old enough to either retire, or to focus on doing whatever you can to leave something in this world a bit better off than you found it.

In my case, that translates to finally pouring myself full-time into the history project I've been part-timing on for the past five years and saying a fond farewell to the land trust where I've worked since the first day of 2012. I say "worked" but in all honesty it would be more truthful to call it play. "Workdays" that start and finish with a bike ride and boat ride, sandwiched around an ever-changing mix of things like hiking, trail-building, photographing, writing, and bantering with co-worker...some other word is needed for this than "work."

I should tell you just a bit more about the project that has lured me away from VLT. It's called the Public History Project, and those of us involved in it are re-examining the land and people at the mouth of the Mahicannitukw, better known now as the Hudson River. Our view of this place's history spans the past 20,000 years, and pays special attention to the human and non-human residents whose lives were altered, stolen, or extinguished in the process of building a very large and wealthy city. I won't spend any more time on my soapbox than that, other than to say that the conventional histories that my generation grew up hearing don't really tell the whole story, nor a very true one—and just as future generations deserve the open spaces and intact ecosystems that land trusts

work to provide, they also deserve to learn accurate history...so I'm leaving one good cause in order to fully focus on another.

I leave VLT knowing that it's in good hands—not only the Skoog Park crew of Andrea, Sheri, Tom, and Hope, but also the hundreds of supporting members who have the foresight, commitment, and generosity to keep VLT and its preserves available to the plants, animals and people that it all benefits. My twelve years here have been happy ones, and I will look forward to the land trust's continued efforts and successes. Sincere thanks to the whole VLT community,

—Kerry Hardy, Outgoing Stewardship Coordinator

VOLUNTEERS MAKE IT HAPPEN



The Jaques Family. Photo by Andrea Hogan.

We would like to extend a special thank you to the Jaques family for their generosity and ferocity in tackling much needed trail maintenance on the Fox Rocks Trail in the Perry Creek Conservation area. In an incredible showing of collaboration, the Jaques family helped to cut-back, mark, and improve one of the longest networks of trails on Vinalhaven. With many hands, we were able to complete a huge amount of work in just one day! So next time you find yourself walking the Fox Rocks trail, feel free

to take a moment to appreciate the wonderful results of volunteer collaboration and how it improves the trails for everyone.

We'd also like to say a special thanks to Mark, Bobby and Omar who provided Kerry and me with some much-needed support in repairing a bridge on the Perry Creek North trails. We couldn't have done it without you!

—Tom Crisp, Stewardship Coordinator

Planned Giving

A planned gift of any size will help ensure the protection of the habitats and scenic views we all love. Such a gift could be accomplished by simply adding a codicil (amendment) to your will, or by naming VLT as the beneficiary of an insurance policy or retirement plan. If you are the owner of an IRA, you can make a qualified charitable distribution to VLT. In planning your gift, you should consult with a financial advisor or attorney to discuss your particular situation. Please contact Executive Director Andrea Hogan at 207-863-2543 or email her at executive.director@vinalhavenlandtrust.org to discuss your intentions and for more information on planned giving options.

Our Leadership

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Claudia Dengler
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Sheri Romer Brock, *Office Assistant & Monitoring Oversight*
Hope Steffens, *Programs & Communications Coordinator*
Kerry Hardy, *Stewardship Coordinator*
Tom Crisp, *Stewardship Coordinator*

WISH LIST

Electric
wheelbarrow



Help Conserve the Nature of Vinalhaven

Join us in protecting Vinalhaven's natural beauty with your membership or additional contribution. Use this form or donate online at www.vinalhavenlandtrust.org. Yearly membership is \$20 per person. Thank you!

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____
 Check enclosed.

If you'd prefer to pay by credit card or PayPal, please visit our website: vinalhavenlandtrust.org and click on the Donate Now button. Thank you!


Name _____
Address _____
Town/City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

All donations, including dues, are tax deductible and will ensure that you receive VLT's newsletter and notice of special events. Contributions at all levels are greatly appreciated.

www.vinalhavenlandtrust.org • 207-863-2543 • PO Box 268 • Vinalhaven, Maine • 04863

Vinalhaven Land Trust conserves and stewards our island's important natural, recreational, and agricultural resources, including scenic and other traditionally valued places, for the benefit and enjoyment of the entire Vinalhaven community. Through education and engagement, VLT seeks to advance understanding and appreciation of the natural world.

Photo: Kerry Hardy


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