

SOUTH HERO LAND TRUST

Newsletter

Autumn 2010

Images of Land Conservation: Local Artist Creates Stunning Woodcut Logo

Woodcut Evokes Beauty of South Hero

Each day presents new moments that help us appreciate the natural beauty of South Hero. Views of Lake Champlain and the Green Mountains, open fields and shady forests, farm stands and apple orchards come together to create a special landscape that South Hero Land Trust is proud to help protect.

When the staff and Board of Directors decided to create a logo to represent our organization, we wanted to be able to share the heart of our work. We reflected on the farms and natural areas we have protected through conservation. We reminisced about the farmers, neighbors, and friends who work the land, walk the trails, and visit the farmers' market.

Collaboration with Local Printmaker

We turned to our steadfast friend Roy Newton of Quiet Pond Graphics to help us create an image of land conservation and community, which we consider to be the core of our work at South Hero Land Trust. Roy spent many hours working on images representing pieces of our work: barns and cornfields, apple trees and farm stands, lakeshore, people, and wildlife. After a great deal of collaboration and reflection he created this beautiful woodcut. *"Minner and I worked for a long time developing a visual image that seemed to reflect both the character of South Hero, and of the Land Trust itself,"* says Roy Newton. *"We are pleased with the result, and hope that the community will enjoy it."*

The Heart of South Hero Land Trust

In this image, we at SHLT see the farms and orchards that comprise South Hero's agricultural heritage, as well as the farmers who grow food for our community. We see the beauty of Lake Champlain and the Green Mountains. We see wildlife living in the natural areas of South Hero. We hope that it evokes the strength and beauty of our landscape and community here in South Hero. We are so glad to be sharing this image with you.

We are truly grateful for Roy Newton's generosity in donating his time, creative spirit, and artwork to South Hero Land Trust. We welcome your reactions and feedback, and we hope that you will contact us with your thoughts. We are available by email at info@shlt.org, or by phone at 802-372-3786. We look forward to hearing from you!



SOUTH HERO



LAND TRUST

a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the farmland, woodland, natural and recreational areas, and open spaces which give South Hero its distinctive quality of life.

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Looking North: New Partnerships Forged in Countywide Farm Viability Projects



In the Champlain Islands we are uniquely linked to the other towns in the county by the water that surrounds us, our strong agricultural heritage and our hardy Islands character. Though South Hero Land Trust's mission is focused on the town of South Hero, over the years and in particular over the past 6 months, we have been looking north and working on establishing new partnerships with the other Grand Isle County towns and farmers.

South Hero Land Trust (SHLT), in partnership with Ruth Wallman of the Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce (LCICC) and Dr. Heather Darby of the University of Vermont Extension, is embarking on several exciting new projects as part of our Farm Initiative Program. One of these projects involves creating an agricultural resource inventory of the Champlain Islands. Our hope is that this inventory will help develop a comprehensive picture of the agricultural economy of the Islands. Our goal is to use this detailed picture to begin to identify opportunities for growth from within the agricultural community, and make recommendations for projects with great potential for the Islands.

This work is funded by two grants: one to SHLT from the Vermont Community Foundation, the second to the LCICC from the USDA. *"The SHLT has been working closely with area farmers and the local community for the past 13 years to promote sustainable farming practices while promoting farm viability. They believe that a vibrant farming community is integral to the overall health of the Islands and it has been a pleasure to work together on these Islands-wide projects with them"* says Heather Darby. This latest collaborative effort is a logical and meaningful extension of SHLT's past efforts.

As part of this collaboration, SHLT has also applied for and received a grant from the Agency of Agriculture's Agricultural Innovation Center to create and strengthen the existing network of farmers in the Islands with Peer-to-Peer learning opportunities that will take place over the next few months. Please contact SHLT if you are a farmer or have an agricultural business, and are interested in participating in these meetings. SHLT is thrilled to be working with Heather and Ruth and we look forward to continued partnerships!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Minner Hobbs".

Minner Hobbs
Executive Director

Local Farms & Local Foods: Feeding our Community at the Champlain Islands Farmers' Market

Record Number of Vendors in 2010

We had another successful year that the Farmers' Market! The new home at St. Rose of Lima Church has expanded parking, shade trees, and lots of green space for playing. The location has attracted new vendors and customers, expanding the goods available each week.

At peak season this summer 28 vendors attended the market, a new record! The expanded market includes several new vegetable farms, grass-fed beef operations, bakers, and other great sources of fresh local foods.

Grant Program Expands Food Access

The Farmers' Market is working hard to reach out to a broader community in the Islands. During this past winter they received an exciting grant allowing them to accept 3SquaresVT (Food Stamp) dollars as well as regular debit cards. Families use their 3SquaresVT cards or debit cards to buy tokens that can be exchanged for fresh fruits, vegetables, and other items at vendors' tents. The program will allow more low income families to purchase the fresh, local fruits and vegetables grown in the Champlain Islands, and enjoy the Farmers' Market.

South Hero Land Trust Connecting Farms and Families

The efforts of the Champlain Islands Farmers' Market to better serve Island families of all income levels inspired SHLT to continue to develop our own efforts to connect farms and families. Through a grant from the VT Agency of Agriculture, we expanded the "Champlain Islands Grown Guide to Agriculture." We added information about the programs at the Farmers' Market, an agricultural calendar for the Islands that demonstrates the seasonality of local produce and fun local activities, as well as tips for eating local on a budget.



A Jersey calf from Lakeside Jersey Farm visits the Farmers' Market for SHLT's Annual Dairy Day



The Hood family enjoys a fresh, local snack at the farmers' market, from the back of a farm truck!

The Farmers' Kitchen Shares Simple Meal Ideas

SHLT also created a series of cooking demonstrations at the Farmers' Market called "The Farmers' Kitchen." We invited local chefs to demonstrate cooking quick, simple meals using ingredients from the Farmers' Market. We provided free samples, recipes, and information about the 3SquaresVT and Farm to Family Programs.

In August, local chef and grower Michael Byrne shared recipes and samples of grilled pizza and several seasonal salads. Customers were enthusiastic about the event and often inquired about where to find the ingredients. They were eager to have recipes, which we made available on the SHLT website the following week. We hope to do similar events in the future!

VYCC Crew Works to Improve Trail Surface at Round Pond State Park

VYCC Crew Spends a Week in August at Round Pond

A Vermont Youth Conservation Corps trail crew spent a summer week working on the public access trail at Round Pond State Park. The all-women crew worked to rebuild the first part of the trail where runoff was creating a muddy mess each spring. They dug deeper ditches, replaced the culvert, and installed a new drainage system along the trail surface.

The work was funded by a grant received by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, thanks to Trails Coordinator Jessica Rickertson. Jessica partners with SHLT each year to plan trail improvements, clean-up seasonal damage, and keep the trails mown. She coordinated the VYCC work this summer, and worked alongside them in the field.

Crew Installs a “Ladder” System for Drainage and Mud Control

The project involved installing a “ladder” at the surface of the trail. *“We used a method called turnpiking on the trail, whereby the tread is rebuilt using soils that drain. The problem here was poor clay soils combined with poor drainage,”* explained Jessica.

The work crew installed a 95-foot horizontal ladder of wooden beams along the surface. They filled it with gravel, which will allow rainfall to seep slowly into the ground, rather than running directly into the stream below. The ladder should reduce damage from use during mud season and provide a better, drier walking surface.

The all-women crew is part of the “Female Leadership Development Crew,” a VYCC program that builds both leadership skills and empowerment for women in the field of conservation. They spent nine weeks working on trails across Vermont. Thanks to VYCC, for all of your hard work on trails across Vermont!



VYCC crew improving the drainage of the public trails at Round Pond



New “ladder” trail surface at Round Pond

Farewell and Thanks to Mitzi Johnson!



Peter Zamore presents Mitzi Johnson with a framed print of Islandacres Farm

After 13 years, Mitzi Johnson has retired from the South Hero Land Trust Board of Directors. *“Mitzi was a founding board member of the organization and played a pivotal role in guiding the land trust over the past decade,”* says Minner Hobbs. *“She has been a real asset to us and will be greatly missed!”* Mitzi’s firsthand experience with farming at Allenholm Farm and the Maxham family’s farm informed her time on the board and continues to be an important part of her life.

At Annual Meeting, Peter Zamore thanked Mitzi for her years of service. SHLT looks forward to continued partnership and collaboration with Mitzi on farming and land conservation in South Hero.

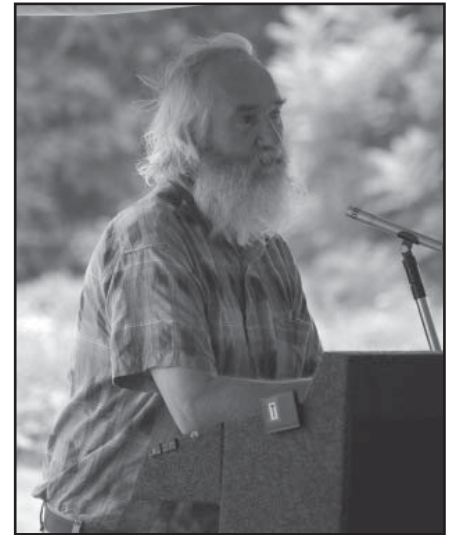
Annual Meeting: Celebrating Conservation & Community!

Reflecting on a Great Year at our Annual Meeting

It was a beautiful day in Hackett's Orchard when we gathered under the big white tent to celebrate another great year for the South Hero Land Trust community. While enjoying yet another amazing potluck feast with lots of local foods, we reflected on the year, said farewell to one of our founding board members, and welcomed our keynote speaker, Jack Lazor.

Jack Lazor Shares Lessons and Laughter

Jack and his wife Anne have been farming in VT for 33 years. They began with a single family cow, and slowly grew a successful organic yogurt business that distributes throughout New England. They remain committed to enhancing the environment and community through their farm practices. Jack and Anne generously took time out of their busy lives to share the stories and lessons they have learned in a lifetime of farming in Vermont. Jack started his talk by marveling that, *"No matter where I go in Vermont, I always feel like I am welcomed as a neighbor. Thanks for welcoming us to South Hero."*



Speaker Jack Lazor inspired us and made us laugh with stories of farming in VT

Jack recalled the early days, *"I traveled all over the state and my wife did the important and difficult work of staying home and tending to the farm. It takes a partnership to make a farm successful,"* Jack said.

"Farming is a lot of hard work, but it's also a really good life."

Jack and Anne are clearly proud of that partnership and the way they manage their herd of cows with simple, yet innovative, ideas they implement throughout their operation. Their casual but careful approach to life and farming shone through as Jack spoke with the crowd. He quickly forgot about the microphone and podium, and approached us on our level. He talked of the trials and errors they

have gone through during their 30 plus years and how difficult it can be to keep things going. *"Farming is a lot of hard work, but it's also a really good life,"* said Jack. A perfect and clear message from a new friend!

Wagon Rides and Butter Making

Jen Maxham and Silva Warren entertained our younger community members with butter making, face painting, and other fun activities. The picnic was followed by a wagon tour of the orchard with Ron Hackett and Debbie Plumley, who shared their own experiences of farming in VT. Thanks to everyone for a great day!



Community members gather for a delicious potluck feast under the tent

Summer Sunshine: A Photo Gallery



Jen Maxham invites local kids to visit her Jersey calf and learn about raising dairy cows in Vermont



Chris Boget of Lake Champlain Land Trust discusses native trees during a Round Pond walk at Apple Island Resort



Galen Wilkerson and Dick Heilman volunteer with South Hero Land Trust to clean White's Beach on Green-Up Day



A group of local girls enjoy Hackett's Orchard during Annual Meeting



Haeli Warren & Sophia Wells walk along the edge of the apple trees at Hackett's Orchard



A springtime view of Lemon Lily Farm during a wildflower walk with Naomi King and Hobart Tracy



Marcy Summers and other members enjoy a great potluck at Annual Meeting

Renewable Energy Study on Five Local Farms To be Complete in October

Study Creates Inventory of Energy Usage and Environmental Resources at Five Farms

As we reported in our January newsletter, SHLT and five local farms are participating in a year long renewable energy feasibility study. Consultants from a local company, Spring Hill Solutions, have spent the last several months examining the energy usage of Hackett's Orchard, Islandacres Farm, Lakeside Jersey Farm, Paradise Bay Farm, and Timstead Farm. They have identified the environmental resources available on each farm for producing energy, and the financial feasibility of each renewable energy technology.

Cooperative Projects May Allow Farms to Share Resources

After identifying potential technologies at each farm, Spring Hill Solutions began looking at the farms as a group. They have identified several renewable energy resources that might be best utilized by cooperative projects between the farms, in which they can share infrastructure and initial financial investments.

Final Report on Project to be Complete this Autumn

Spring Hill Solutions is now completing the study of collaborative projects for producing farm energy, and has begun putting together a final report to the farmers that outlines all of their research. They will be presenting SHLT and the five farms with a comprehensive report in October.

Please detach along the dotted line and return to South Hero Land Trust with your check and information

YES! I support South Hero Land Trust.

Community Support is one of the most important aspects of our organization. In order to keep membership affordable, our membership dues are only \$10.00 per person annually, and \$25.00 for a family. If you are able to contribute more than the basic membership, your additional contribution is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

For more information on gifts of stock or contributions to conservation projects, contact Minner at (802) 372-3786.

\$10 contribution, basic annual membership for one person.

\$25 contribution for annual business membership.

\$25 contribution, basic annual family membership.
There are ____ people in my family.

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Member Name: _____

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South Hero Land Trust
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This Autumn at South Hero Land Trust



Landon Community Trail to open this fall!

Please call for opening date, directions, and details.

Fall Membership Dive Look for our mailing this October. We need your support!

If you have any questions, contact Emily or Minner
372-3786 or info@shlt.org