

# Views *from* Mount Grace



WINTER 2019  
VOLUME 30, NO. 3

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Connecting with the Woods
- Building Bridges
- Sunset View Farm
- Mural Unveil at Quabbin Harvest
- Margaret Power-Biggs Society: Jerry and Jean Wagener

Since 1986 serving:

Ashburnham

Athol

Barre

Bernardston

Erving

Gardner

Gill

Greenfield

Hardwick

Hubbardston

Leyden

Montague

New Salem

Northfield

Orange

Petersham

Phillipston

Royalston

Templeton

Warwick

Wendell

Westminster

Winchendon



Emma Ellsworth, Deputy Director, accompanied by her two German Short Haired Pointers, June and Kona.

## Different Ways of Connecting With the Woods

BY EMMA ELLSWORTH

My father used to demand that children be outside on weekends. There were tree forts, long arduous hikes on the M&M trail and paddles on the Connecticut river that always ended with tipping the canoe and splashing in the water. I loved the woods at every season – on a cool fall day, or even a smoldering summer day. When it would start to rain I would imagine myself being gently misted, like lettuce in the produce section of the grocery store. In the woods I was a walker, hiker, weekend warrior, trail runner; but I never anticipated describing myself as a hunter.

Ten years ago I took a walk in the woods with my now husband, Tom. It was the day before shotgun season. He was scouting. I was curious. He was explaining how to slow my steps, control the crunch on sticks and leaves. He told me to pause at every “window,” to stop and listen and take in the next area of the woods. He told me to look for what was horizontal, out of place against the verticals of the tree trunks. Then he paused, enthusiastically looking at the ground. Several does regularly used this path down off a rocky escarpment, did I see it? Then, here is the buck track crossing theirs and following. See it? No. I saw leaves. Wet leaves, acorns, a salamander. I didn’t see deer. How could I not see what was so apparent to one schooled by a grandfather, grandmother, father, and uncles in the art of hunting?

> continued on page 3



# Building Bridges: In the Woods and in the Classroom

BY COREY WRINN

Gifford Family Memorial Forest in Orange offers a leisurely walk in dense forest with the soothing sound of the Tully Brook running along the trail system. Some might even venture to the fishing hole named after the late Senator Bob Wetmore. Until not long ago a key piece of the property had been missing: a bog bridge allowing hikers to cross the brook and explore the trails along either side of the water. For a while, sticks and other logs were laid down to make the crossing easier, but every visitor came out with very mucky boots by the end of their walk.

When I started my year as a TerraCorps-AmeriCorps service member, I met my college academic advisor from Umass Amherst who expressed interest in partnering with Mount Grace on a civic engagement project. Bridging my connections paid off and it wasn't long before four courageous students joined the Mount Grace Stewardship team to learn the value of trail maintenance.

On a brisk October morning, KimLynn Nguyen, Steve Rawson, the students and I met at the site and began the task of building a stream crossing. We lugged three 200-pound joists across the muddy stream, leveled base boards and placed the decking. The students gained valuable stewardship and craftsmanship skills from using a power drill to safely handling the heavy building

materials. Thanks to their enterprising efforts we finished within two days. Come enjoy our new bridge and dry boots by visiting the property on Tully Road, next to Noel's Nursey in Orange.



Umass Amherst students helping the Stewardship team build a bridge as part of a Civic Engagement course.

## Connecting With the Woods > *continued from page 1*

As I was heading into Boston in office attire the next morning, Tom was heading to the woods clad in camo and blaze orange. To be honest, I thought he had made it all up. Or at least exaggerated. I grew up in the woods. I thought I knew them. I was wrong. By the time I was stuck in traffic at the Concord rotary, Tom had shot his buck in the exact spot he predicted it would be.

Hunting suddenly meant something totally new to me. It was about being in the woods differently, listening more, slowing down. There is a whole story that the leaves have to share that I didn't have the language for.

Now working for Mount Grace, I get to spend my life conserving the lands that we fish, hunt, and love; but we are also protecting the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the peace that vistas give us. Whether we are jogging through them, walking as quietly as possible, or taking only pictures; we all connect with the land differently. At Mount Grace we all work together, focusing on what we have in common, not our differences. The land unites us all.

# A New Dawn for Sunset View Farm

BY CAMI DUQUET

The story of Sunset View Farm begins with the sale of wild blueberries picked by Chuck and Livvy Tarleton's daughters almost 40 years ago. The 70-acre property borders route 140 on the Gardner-Winchendon line and with the thousands of commuters that pass by, it didn't take long for the blueberries to sell out. Overtime the few baskets of blueberries for sale on a cart were eventually replaced by the iconic colorful farmstand where the Tarletons have been selling their delicious organic fruits and vegetables for over two decades.

The property had been in active farming for over 200 years when Chuck and Livvy purchased it in the 1970s. In fact, the name Sunset View Farm originates from an old sign that was left in a shed by the previous farmers. Now, Mount Grace and the Tarletons are honoring this legacy by working together on a campaign that guarantees the land and all the infrastructure will always be protected and affordable to the next generations of farmers.

The community support for the farm has been nothing short of remarkable; nearly 200 families and individuals contributed time and money to help keep Sunset View Farm the way it's meant to be – a farm. We give special thanks to the customers of the stand, residents from nearby towns, supporters of local food and farm protection, close friends and family of Chuck and Livvy's, and all those who stepped up to make a difference for the campaign. Whether it was spreading the word on social media, baking goodies for a fundraiser, making a special gift, or in Murdock Dairy Bar's case donating ice cream; everybody contributed to make Sunset View Farm a Whole Farm Forever.



As this campaign comes to a close, a new dawn rises for Sunset View Farm. The land, the active fields, the wetland habitat, the historical house, and the colorful farmstand will remain part of the landscape. Thanks to the outstanding support from the community, the legacy of fresh local food and farming will never set on Sunset View Farm.



Locally grown fruits and vegetables are sold in the colorful roadside farmstand throughout the growing season.  
Photo by Norm Eggert Photography.

# Upward Energy for the Food Co-Op

BY CATHY STANTON

During a recent dedication ceremony for a new mural on the south side of Quabbin Harvest, board chair Cathy Stanton joked that the business is considering a new tag line: “Quabbin Harvest: Definitely not a bank.”

The building was home to Workers Credit Union until Mount Grace purchased it as a home for the co-op five years ago. Since then, the interior has been redesigned with grocery store fittings. But the lackluster outside presented a challenge in communicating Quabbin Harvest’s special mission of strengthening local economic and environmental resilience by serving as a hub for the area’s food economy.

A striking new mural, created by Orange artist and co-op member Susan Marshall, is now helping to spread that message. Painted on five canvasses and then photographed, enlarged, and attached to weatherproof metal panels, the mural covers almost the full height of the chimney on the building’s south side. It depicts intertwining native food plants against the backdrop of the Millers River with Mt Grace at the very top.



Jake Lyman of Lyman Signs in Phillipston fabricated and installed the five panels of Susan Marshall’s “Reaching for the Sky” mural at Quabbin Harvest. Photo by Emily Laffond for Lyman Signs.



Orange artist Susan Marshall and three of her grandchildren helped to dedicate Marshall’s “Reaching for the Sky” mural at Quabbin Harvest on November 9. Photo by Cathy Stanton.

About 40 people attended the dedication on November 9, admiring the bright colors and eye-catching images against a brilliant late fall sky. Mimi Hellen Jones, a Mount Grace board member who serves as the organization’s liaison to the Quabbin Harvest board, noted that the mural connects the natural and agricultural dimensions of the area’s landscape, affirming the shared mission of the land trust and the food co-op.

The mural was funded in part through the local cultural councils of Athol, New Salem, Orange, Phillipston, Warwick, and Wendell. Further helping to re-brand the building, new signs have also recently been installed through grant funding from the Massachusetts Food Trust Program. These include the co-op’s actual new tag line: “Eat local. Celebrate farms. Find friends.”

# MARGARET POWER-BIGGS SOCIETY

## Member Profile: Jean and Jerry Wagener

BY DAVID KOTKER

The deck at Jean and Jerry Wagener's home in Northfield looks out to the densely wooded summit of Louisiana Mountain. "I sometimes think of it as my mountain," says Jerry, who retired from the Mount Grace Board of Directors this year.

Mountains are clearly an inspiration to both Jerry and Jean, and the Wageners have made climbing, hiking, and conservation, central to their lives.

"When we had young kids, we thought it would be fun to climb all the Adirondack high peaks as a family," Jean says. "So we started in 1976 and it took us about six years to get to the top of all of them," adds Jerry. That's peaks over 4,000 feet for those who would like to give this a try. There are 46 major Adirondack peaks and the Wageners have scaled them all.

Jerry and his son Jeff went on to be the first father and son team to summit the highest peak in each of the 50 states and Jerry is the first person ever to climb them all when over the age of 50.

Closer to home, both Jerry and Jean hike the miles of trails in Northfield—which Jerry has helped catalog, and in some cases create, as a member of the Town Open Space Committee.

Jean and Jerry pick the Hobo Trail and the Gunnery Sergeant Jeff Ames Wheelchair Accessible Trail as their favorite in-town trails. Both are on land protected by family friends Bill and



The Wagener Family on top of White Face Mountain in 1976.

Nancy Ames, with help from Mount Grace. The information kiosks and cantilevered viewing platform that Jerry designed to stretch out over the pond at these trails became Mount Grace's standard models and can now be found on conserved land from Greenfield east to Westminster.

It was Bill Ames who encouraged the Wageners to get involved with Mount Grace. Jerry joined the Board in 2010 and the Wageners have long been members of the Margaret Power-Biggs Society. "We've always been interested in the outdoors, and conservation, and protecting the land," says Jerry, "and Mount Grace has done, and is doing, so much of that right here locally."

*If you would like information about joining the Margaret Power-Biggs Society or helping to conserve the local landscape, please contact David Kotker at 978-248-2055 x19 or kotker@mountgrace.org*

## WINTER 2019 UPCOMING EVENTS – Join Us!

### New Year's Hike to Susan Beard Hall Memorial Trail

Led by Ron Wolanin, Mass Audubon

**Saturday, January 4th, 2020 (weather date January 11th)**

Rutland Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, Allen Camp Rd, Petersham

### Wildlife Tracking Workshop

Led by Paul Wanta

**Saturday, February 8th, 2020**

Skyfields Arboretum, 1461 Old Keene Rd, Athol

### The Quabbin to Wachusett Story by Leigh Youngblood

Sponsored by the Lexington Field and Garden Club

**Sunday, March 15th, 2020**

Cary Memorial Library, 1874 Massachusetts Ave, Lexington

Visit our website for more event descriptions and registration information at [mountgrace.org/events](http://mountgrace.org/events).

# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Gifts were Received *In Memory of*  
Kenneth J. Girouard, John and Ledlie Woolsey

Gifts were Received *In Honor of*  
the Wedding of Carlen Audette and Nate Whitney

## Special Thanks from Mount Grace to ~

*Sponsors and other contributors of our 33rd Annual Meeting at West Gate Farm hosted by the Pratt Family!*

### SPONSORS:

Athol Savings Bank  
The Centennial House Bed and Breakfast  
Greenfield Farmers Cooperative Exchange  
Greenfield Northampton Cooperative Bank  
The Petersham Country Store  
Quabbin Harvest (anonymous donation)  
Rose 32

### CONTRIBUTORS:

Dan Leahy  
Eileen Mariani  
Emma Ellsworth  
Ellsworth Contracting  
Hitchcock Brewing Company  
Joe Graveline and Nina Gross  
Kurt Benson and Lynn Taylor  
Macmannis Florist and Greenhouses  
Maple Mama Beverages  
Red Apple Farm  
Sunset View Farm  
Sweet Lucy's Bakery  
Wingate Farm  
Will and Shalee Pratt



Over 160 people gathered on October 5th for our 33rd Annual Meeting on West Gate Farm in Bernardston. It was a perfect fall day filled with good times and good friends. Thank you to all the sponsors, contributors, and volunteers that made it possible! Photo by Norm Eggert Photography.

*Our wonderful crew of volunteers over the summer and into the fall for helping us run events, take care of properties, and everything in between!*

The Ames Family	Clare Green	Ken Palin
Francis Arnold	Ramona Hamblin	George Perides
Beth Arseneau	Isabelle Hanley	Jay Rasku
Julia Blyth	Mimi Hellen Jones	Steve Rawson
Laurie Boohsada	Ray Jackson	Sam and Barbara Richardson
Martin Bowers	Will Lane	Steve Roberto
Dave Christianson	Pat Larson	Tom Russo
Len Crossman	Bryan Long	Kyle Simmington
Anne Cutler-Russo	Joanne McGee	Carolyn and Fred Sellars
Pascale Duquet	Lis McLoughlin	Kyle Simmington
Bill Ellsworth	Lillian Minihane	Steve Svoboda
Bill and Laurel Facey	Dale Monette	Natalie Talbot
Don Flye	Elaine Mroz	Martha Tenny
Norm Flye	North Quabbin Trails Association	Lee Thomas
Celt Grant	Christine O'Donell	Marie Urqhart



Steve Roberto is a team leader for Lend-a-Hand group for our neighbors at home in Northfield Village. Thanks to him and Sam Richardson for clearing the trail at Alderbrook Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary.



**MOUNT GRACE LAND CONSERVATION TRUST**  
1461 Old Keene Road  
Athol, MA 01331

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 183  
Greenfield, MA

This issue of  
*Views from Mount Grace*  
is sponsored by:

**SIMMINGTON**  
**SEASONAL**  
**SERVICES**  
LANDSCAPING ~ SNOW REMOVAL  
**413.522.2209**  
ORANGE, MA

You **OTTER** check out our 2019 Annual Appeal letter to find out where Mount Grace is protecting important wildlife habitat for me and my friends!



Photo by Dale Monette