

TRUST IN OUR TOWN

A PUBLICATION BY THE KENNEBUNKPORT CONSERVATION TRUST



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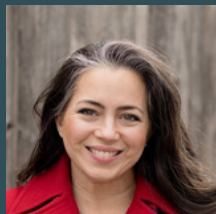
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Susan MacDonald



Shanna Jadooram



Danielle Sette



Travis Gomez

17 Western Avenue, Unit 1, Kennebunk, ME 04043

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PO Box 7004, Cape Porpoise, ME 04014 | 207-967-3465 | info@kporttrust.org

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A Word From Our Director

Tom Bradbury

Not that long ago, the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust celebrated its 50th anniversary. To those who remembered its humble beginnings, this seemed a remarkable achievement. A dream of what could be had, over the course of time, become a reality. The islands of Cape Porpoise, the lighthouse on Goat Island, much of Goose Rocks Beach, downtown parks, scenic vistas, and over 3,000 acres of undisturbed forest, the places we love and that bind us as a community, were set aside for all and forever.



It didn't end there. Over thirty miles of trails were created in those protected woods, designed carefully to guard wildlife, even as they convey the mental, physical, and often spiritual comfort of being in touch with nature. Campsites were created and maintained on the islands. The damage done to Goat Island by an earlier, violent storm was undone and the lighthouse was returned to its former glory as the focal point of the harbor. When an ever-increasing number of youngsters appeared timid toward enjoying their forest surroundings, we created Trust in Our Children, a teaching experience that allows them to visit and learn from the land, and in the process gain a greater sense of place. This grew throughout the district and was expanded to include support of the Kennebunk High School Alternative Education and the local scouting programs. When concerns arose about a changing climate and the threat that a rising sea posed to our many coastal properties, we created a Gulf of Maine class. Students from Kennebunk High School and the University of New England discovered together the positive impacts they could make on their own communities, giving both knowledge and hope to a generation coming of age in a rapidly changing world. The success of this class led us to believe that we could achieve a far greater impact if we took it to scale; thus was born The Climate Initiative, a separate 501-c-3 non-profit that creates and distributes on-line learning modules for teachers and their classes, encompassing a broad range of climate related issues. In the five years since its creation, these tool kits have been used in all 50 states and 51 countries. They have been translated into 6 languages and used by over 6,300 teachers and 800,000 students, an astounding accomplishment which has grown out of our own community.

Remarkable too are the discoveries being made by our Cape Porpoise Archaeological Alliance, another outgrowth of our educational programs. To date, working in conjunction with the Brick Store Museum, through local digs and discoveries, that team has pushed the historical knowledge of our town back 8000 years. They have discovered the oldest dugout canoe on the coast in the Northeast, an area stretching from New York through the Canadian Maritimes. It was carbon dated from about 1269 a.d. to 1379 a.d. They have found spear points, fish weirs, a tent ring, the site of an early Indigenous settlement and so much more. And all of this took place while we carried on with our primary focus of protecting and maintaining our precious landscape.

Last year, the first chapter of the Trust's next 50 years began. While our anniversary year was one of reflection, the next was spent looking ahead, building on the foundation of all that has been created and buoyed by a deeply introspective and highly developed strategic plan. Though much has been accomplished, much more remains to be done, and the KCT staff works tirelessly to make our new dreams a reality. We do this to make our community, and your life as a part of it, better as we continue to protect, steward and add to the properties that bring us joy and meaning.

On the pages that follow, you will be able to learn much more about the Trust's projects and the people that bring them to life. We hope that you'll grow to appreciate all the work that goes into creating and maintaining the cornerstone properties upon which the Kennebunkport community is built. What's more, we also hope that you will join us in our efforts, for all we do is based upon the support of individual donors and the work of volunteers. Just as in the past, we believe that together we can make a difference. Together we can do great things. We would welcome your help and support as this exciting new chapter is written.

A Year Rooted in Gratitude, Community, and Place

Nikki Schlie

As I look back on what was a very full year at the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust, one feeling rises above all others: gratitude. Gratitude for this community, for our supporters, volunteers and colleagues, who give so generously of their time and care, and for the land that continues to teach me something new every day.

One of the most memorable experiences of my year was spending a weekend on Goat Island, a place shaped by generations that truly does something to your soul. Watching my nephews climb the tower, race along the walkway, and scour the beach for treasures destined for the island's little "souvenir shop" for visiting guests was pure joy. We stayed up late watching the sunset by the fire, sharing pizza and smores we brought over from shore. Bundled against the chill, we rose early for a breathtaking sunrise, feeling the ocean breeze drift through the windows as the island came to life. We all felt the unmistakable energy of a place rich with history and memory. Goat Island's magic is something you simply have to feel.



This year was also marked by deepening relationships. Friendships grew among our team and our volunteers, and bonds strengthened with others whose values and life goals align with my own. Finding myself in a career that is more than "just a job" has been incredibly rewarding. Every day, the work is rooted in protecting our wildlife, water quality, forests, and birds, so future generations can experience the same sense of wonder that I feel now. From routine tasks in the office to the thrill of seeing a white porcupine for the first time, it all feels connected. There were many highlights woven throughout the year. KCT was honored to receive the Chamber's Silver Award for Best Trails, and our team organized a wide range of meaningful events from a retirement celebration for our lighthouse keepers to a birthday party honoring First Lady Barbara Bush.

We cleared invasives and brush in preparation for a ceremony recognizing those who contributed to Meadow Woods, and I had the opportunity to participate in my first land acquisition campaign since beginning my work here. Creating and designing the Tommy McNamara Trail Challenge was another standout, shaped by hours of collaboration to inspire youth to get outdoors and explore their senses.

Travel to Cleveland for the National Land Conservation Conference allowed us to build valuable connections with land trusts from across the country, while attending the Sustainability Fellows Showcase right around the corner at UNE was energizing proof that the next generation is deeply committed to environmental stewardship. This year reinforced why this work matters. Protecting land is about more than acres conserved; it's about community, continuity, and connection.

I am endlessly grateful to be part of KCT and to share in the responsibility and the privilege of caring for these special places, today and for generations to come.

**Thank you to the KCT, for enhancing
our community, in perpetuity.**

THE LAMARRE FAMILY

Trust in Education

Jenna Van Haren

As I walked through the hallway of Consolidated school before a teacher planning meeting this fall, I heard my name, "Jenna! What are you doing at school?" This was my sign that summer was shifting into fall field trip season and a continuation of the partnership between the Trust in Education program, the teachers and the students. The partnership with RSU 21 remains strong. Each Consolidated School class visits a trust property two or three times per year and in addition to classes from other schools the Trust has become an outdoor learning campus for the entire school district. It is awesome to build these relationships because I get to see these students so many times throughout the year. We are settling into a steady curriculum that meets state standards while remaining flexible enough to adapt to every student's needs. RSU 21 recognized KCT with the Payson Hunter Award for its sustained commitment to environmental education. "Our partnership with the Trust is vital. It isn't just a field trip," said Karen Bubar, Principal, Consolidated School, "it's a core part of how our students understand the world."

I also enjoy working with The High School Alternative Education program throughout the year. During field trips, the older students mentored younger students to use their senses, explore bird sounds, and gain a greater appreciation of our local surroundings. The Alt-Ed students made an extra effort this year by revamping the storybook trail and building a sensory experience. The Trust also expanded to the RSU 57 district with a robust hybrid of virtual programs and nature journaling at the Trust properties.

Meanwhile, private groups like Acton Academy and Growing Wild 4-H have brought students from across Southern Maine to discover the unique ecosystems of Kennebunkport. This impact extends beyond the traditional school year. By reestablishing a bond with Kennebunkport Parks and Recreation, summer campers explored Goose Rocks Beach and Meadow Woods in a less structured environment.

As KCT enters the next season, the focus shifts toward sustainability and inclusion. Efforts continue with the Southern Maine Wabanaki Learning Group to integrate Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum. Nationally, the Land Trust Alliance has even featured KCT's "Trust in Education" program in their official Evaluation Guide—a testament to the high standard set right here in Kennebunkport.

Whether you are a student, a parent, or a curious neighbor, there is a place for you to learn on our trails. This summer we will continue to provide educational and outdoor opportunities.



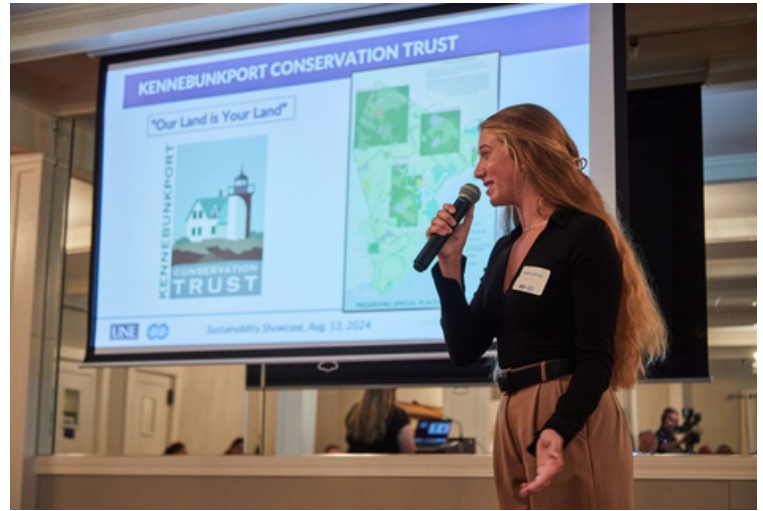
Participate all
summer!



Our First Property Steward

Juliann Lapierre

For 53 years, the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust has relied on its dedicated and hardworking volunteers to ensure that its properties are well taken care of. In 2024, the Trust recognized that the expansion of its holdings came with the expectation and need for greater attention. That's where I come into play as the KCT's first Property Steward. My background started by growing up in the great outdoors of Maine and studying Environmental Science at the University of New England. I spent much of my time at UNE learning about the ecosystems across Southern Maine, the various threats they face, and getting hands-on experiences regarding how to protect them, oftentimes on KCT properties. It is such an honor to have been hired on as KCT's Property Steward in 2025 to build upon and apply all that I have learned in my experiences to make KCT's holdings environmentally sound.



The management of all these properties and trails is a task much too big for any one person. It truly takes a village to be able to stay on top of the many needs these lands require. During my first year of employment, I spent time learning about the inner workings of the Trust and worked extensively with those who have volunteered with the organization for years, met many people who contribute to KCT's success, and studied the strategic plan that was implemented in 2024. Last year we accomplished so much, most notably the construction of the Hutchins Trail in Meadow Woods Preserve, the connection of Todd's Trail to the rest of the Emmons Preserve, and winning Silver for Best Trails from the Chamber of Commerce.

When my boots weren't on the ground with volunteers, interns, and other staff, they were behind the scenes working on building the systems to ensure that we fully care for all we have. With a full year at the Trust officially under my belt, I would like to say that all those systems are fully in place, but the truth is that the journey has just begun! We have much work that we can do together.

As the Trust's first Property Steward, I am blazing the path for current and future stewardship operations and projects. The Trust's goals aim high, and my role is to lift the organization closer to achieving them. Mine is a dynamic job and no two days are the same. As the year shifts between seasons, I too, shift from project to project, and focus to focus, working with the community and the land to reach for the next rung of the ladder. Ideally, in time, the systems being built now, will be able to sustain and improve the quality of our current and future holdings.



Our First Property Steward

continued



The community of our forests are based upon the legacy of those who came before us and loved these previous lands as we do. KCT has become a melting pot of backgrounds, ideas, and experiences, all playing a part in shaping what we do. Managing 3,000 acres of land, 30 miles of trails, and several buildings is not easy but this is a time to let my love of place shine so that every time someone steps out onto a KCT property they are grateful for all that has been set aside for them and for all. I want to say thank you to the staff, board, and volunteers that I've worked with for being so supportive and for teaching me all they've come to learn about the Trust. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to continue the legacies that started here so long, and to work within such a caring community. I look forward to expanding this branch of the Trust and to connecting further with everyone involved with this iconic organization.



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Our Land is Your Land

The Kennebunkport Conservation Trust has conserved over 3,000 acres of land from development. Much of our land is preserved in its natural state, protecting valuable ecosystems and wildlife habitat. We also have numerous properties that are available for exploration and recreation. These properties are open to the public free of charge at all times during all seasons.

Emmons Preserve Located just 3.7 miles from Dock Square at 57 Gravelly Brook Road, the Emmons Preserve serves as the headquarters and hub of KCT's operations and activities. The preserve boasts an extensive trail system that stretches all the way to Cape Porpoise, passing through cool, quiet forest and meandering alongside the Batson River. The KCT Labyrinth and Fitness Trail are located on the Emmons Preserve. The KCT headquarters building houses our offices and public gathering spaces. There are picnic tables, Adirondack chairs, and a fire pit to enjoy, and the building is available to rent for events.



James Wood Located at 52 North Street, just across from the municipal parking lot. James Wood is a mile long trail that meanders through the woods just outside of town.



Ganny's Garden/River Green On Ocean Avenue right around the corner from Dock Square, just below the Captain Lord Mansion. Ganny's Garden was created as a community tribute to Barbara Bush. The River Green is another quiet oasis in downtown Kennebunkport, perfect for picnicking or an afternoon escape.

Smith Preserve The Smith Preserve is KCT's largest preserve. The trailhead and parking lot are located on Guinea Road, close to its intersection with Goose Rocks Road. The trails here are suited to bikers and those looking for a longer hike; the Bobcat Ridge Extension has some exciting terrain, but otherwise the trails are fairly gentle.



Tyler Brook Nestled half way between Cape Porpoise Village and Goose Rocks Beach, the Tyler Brook Preserve offers a nice loop to end a hike along the Batson River Trail from Emmons Preserve, or a quiet, short hike all on its own. The Tyler Brook overlook is a great place for picnics, too! There is parking at the end of Tyler Brook Road.



Meadow Woods Preserve

Featuring the Patsy Bray Mahoney Pollinator Meadow

Located at 406 Mills Road, our newest preserve features an off-leash dog area and a lovely pond surrounded by native plants, with a recently completed two mile out and back trail. Meadow Woods Preserve is a great place for a picnic, an afternoon of quiet reading, or a romp with your furry friends!



Clement Clark Boathouse / Old Grist Mill

Just a short walk from Dock Square at 8 Mill Lane, this property provides access to the Kennebunk River. It is a great place for launching kayaks when the tide is high; the covered porch and picnic tables make it a great picnic spot at any time.



Cape Porpoise Islands

KCT has preserved Vaughn’s, Redin’s, Stage, Fort, Cape, Trott’s, Pinkham, Bass and President Bush Island, as well as Goat Island and Goat Island Light. The Islands are open to the public and there are eight free campsites located on Vaughn’s, Cape, and Trott’s islands. The islands are accessible via small watercraft, while Vaughn’s can be reached on foot at low tide. There is a wealth of bird life on the islands, with everything from Sandpipers to Bald Eagles. There is also a thriving archaeology project centered on the islands; Tim Spahr and his team are currently excavating on Redin’s Island, where they have found artifacts dating from the early 20th century back to pre-Columbian times. Of course Goat Island Light is the Shining Star of Kennebunkport. Newly outfitted with solar power, the light will continue to warn ships in bad weather. Like all the other islands, Goat Island is open to the public.

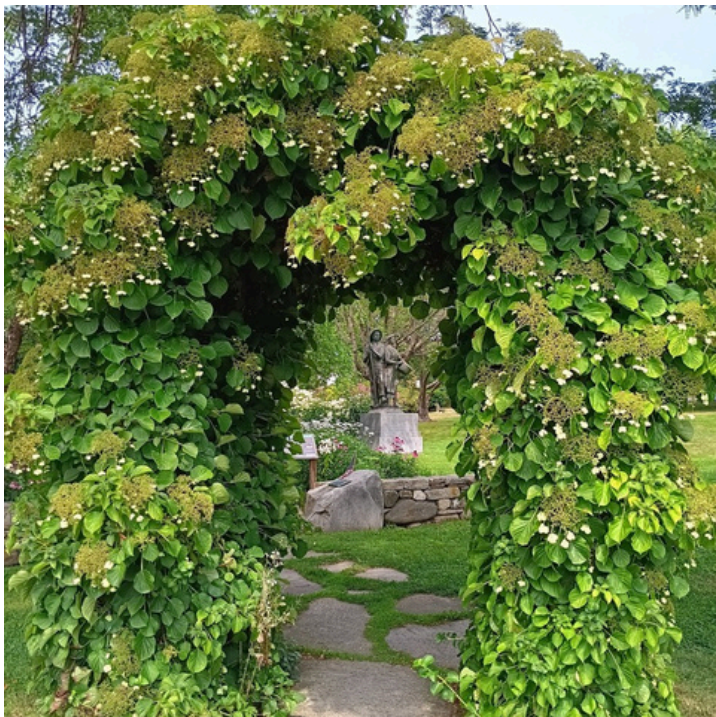


Ganny's Garden

Located on the Trust's River Green in Kennebunkport is Ganny's Garden, a gift and tribute to Former First Lady Barbara Bush. Family and friends surprised Mrs. Bush with this personalized garden in her honor, which was inspired by a needlepoint carpet Mrs. Bush created in which the initials of her grandchildren were hidden amidst a bed of pastel flowers. On the day of the unveiling, Mrs. Bush was visibly touched and expressed her emotion openly to the crowd in attendance. "I hope you know how much this means to me. I am just so grateful to all of you. I just can't believe it," she said.

Barbara Bush was known as Ganny to her seventeen grandchildren, and the initials of all seventeen are engraved in the stone walls which surround the garden. An arbor leads to a stone pathway past three beds of traditional flowers. Plaques and carefully chosen bronze sculptures anchor the area with tributes to Mrs. Bush. One piece features a copy of Mrs. Bush's favorite book, "Pride and Prejudice" and another is a reproduction of her iconic straw sun hat positioned near the book.

Gardening was one of former First Lady's favorite hobbies. She was known for her beautiful gardens at Walker's Point, and her favorite plantings from the Walker's Point gardens have been incorporated into the design. In fact, some plantings were divided from the original perennials at the Walker's Point estate.



Elizabeth Spahr, longtime caretaker of Ganny's Garden said, "All the plants are perennials except the annual Shirley poppies, and the seeds for those poppies came from Walker's Point originally."

Ganny's Garden current caretaker Andrea Lauletta added "Ganny's Garden is a peaceful and meaningful place. Caring for the plants helps me to slow down and feel connected to nature. Knowing the garden honors Barbara Bush makes it even more special, as it represents kindness, strength, and community. Being there allows me to reflect, give back, and be part of something truly meaningful."

When Ganny's Garden is in full bloom, it is a remarkable sight, commanding the attention of professional photographers, visitors, and locals alike, many making a special trip just to experience it in person.

Honoring Barbara Bush



On June 8, 2025, the KCT was honored to host a community-wide celebration of former First Lady Barbara Bush on what would have been her 100th birthday. A devoted supporter of the Trust and longtime member of the Kennebunkport community, Mrs. Bush's legacy brought together friends, neighbors, and admirers for a day that felt both joyful and deeply meaningful.

The day began at 7:00 a.m. with a dog walk along Gooch's Beach, one of Mrs. Bush's favorite places, where she could often be found walking with her own dogs. On a truly gorgeous morning, more than 100 participants gathered with their four-legged companions to follow in her footsteps, sharing stories and memories as they walked the shoreline. Many attendees, both human and canine, embraced the spirit of the day in patriotic or Barbara-inspired attire.



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Honoring Barbara Bush

continued



Later, in collaboration with the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, the Graves Memorial Library, and the Kennebunkport Historical Society, the celebration continued on the River Green beside Ganny's Garden, a cherished space in her honor. The event was open to the public and welcomed the community under a large tent, where thoughtful nods to the Bush family's two homes, Maine and Texas, were woven through the celebration. Guests enjoyed classic lobster rolls from The Clam Shack alongside Texas-style tacos provided by Kitchen Chicks Catering. Live music by Lisa Mills and friends added to the festive atmosphere, while the Graves Library hosted children's storytelling sessions.



More than two dozen beautifully decorated cakes, generously donated by local bakers, were on display, including a stunning replica of Barbara Bush's wedding cake created by Riley's Bakery. Slices were served with ice cream to delighted attendees throughout the afternoon. Guests of all ages were invited to write birthday cards, sharing messages and memories with the Bush family. It was a celebration full of warmth, connection, and community spirit.



Honoring Barbara Bush

continued



By the following morning, the tent had been transformed into a formal setting for the first-day-of-issue ceremony of the Barbara Bush commemorative stamp. KCT was deeply honored to partner with the United States Postal Service for this special occasion. Three hundred guests gathered as Acting Postmaster General Doug Tulino dedicated the stamp, followed by heartfelt remarks from President George W. Bush, who expressed his gratitude to KCT for helping bring the celebration to life, and for their ongoing stewardship of the places he and his family love.

It was a remarkable tribute to an extraordinary woman, one that reflected not only her enduring impact, but also the deep affection held for her by this community.



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Todd's Trail

In 1994, Steve and Natalie Emmons approached the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust with an offer that was too good to refuse. The 37-acre parcel of land next to them was up for sale and they considered it too precious to be lost to development. If the Trust would buy it, they said, then they would donate their 108-acres, complete with their house, barn and farm equipment, asking only for life tenancy in return. "I want to see this property preserved for its vegetation and inhabitants: insects, frogs, deer, woodchucks, and many birds. And, I'd like to see us create a sense of wonder for our children, so that they will learn the value of nature." Steve said. The KCT agreed, and in this process and in their honor, the Emmons Preserve was created. Their legacy, however, is far from over.

The resting place of Steve and Natalie Emmons now overlooks the fields that are often filled with families, children, and school students, honoring their wishes to have young people learn and appreciate the natural world that they are a part of. The trail itself has grown into a 30-mile trail system which stretches throughout the community for public enjoyment. Recently, a new opportunity presented itself to the Trust, one which KCT Executive Director Tom Bradbury believes would've been met with delight and approval from Steve and Natalie Emmons.

"A 17-acre property, that stretches 2,425 feet along the opposite shore of the Batson River at the Emmons Preserve, has been offered to the Trust at a below market price and with favorable terms. Protecting this land is essential to maintaining the character, natural beauty, and wildlife habitat of the preserve. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity to be able to conserve this special place for generations to come. We at the Trust want to do it for Steve and Natalie, because we know how deeply they would have felt. We also want to do it for all those who have come to love and enjoy the tranquility and beauty of this legacy holding and we want to protect it for all those who will follow, as our gift to the future," Bradbury said.



In 2025, \$200,000 was raised and put down as a deposit against the "bargain sale" (sold at below market value) \$700,000 sale price. In exciting news, toward the end of the year the Trust was the recipient of a \$250,000 grant from the Climate Resilience Conservation Fund (CRCF) in coordination with the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and the Maine Coast Heritage Trust. The task now becomes to raise the remaining \$250,000 debt so that the property is debt free by year's end, 2026, a condition of the latest grant.

"Having grown up on large parcels of land, I was raised to respect, enjoy, and value what nature provides," said Sarah Smith. "My husband Todd and I supported the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust for many years. We spent many summers volunteering at Goat Island Light Station, helping to repair docks, decks, and the boathouse. We also regularly attended the Phil Matthews Memorial Lobster Bake—both to support KCT and to reconnect with old friends. When Todd's health declined, our children, Margo and Zach, and I found peace walking the Labyrinth at the Emmons Preserve.

After a long and difficult battle with Lewy Body Dementia, Todd passed away on December 21, 2023. The family held his celebration of life at the KCT headquarters, sharing its beauty with family and friends.

Todd's Trail

continued



In time, thoughts turned to the future, and what to do with the 17 acres abutting the Batson “KCT has always been the best kind of neighbor,” said Sarah “and we’ve loved watching the improvements at the Emmons Preserve over the years. Since our land abuts the KCT trail system, we thought it would be the perfect addition. When we approached Tom Bradbury and he shared his vision to expand the trail system, we knew it was the right decision. KCT has given so much to our family and the wider community. It’s an honor to give something back.” With gratitude, the KCT Board of Directors voted to name the the new trail that circles this beautiful land “Todd’s Trail” in memory of

Todd and in honor of his family and their ties to this special place. Sarah then spoke of her hope for the Trust’s latest holding. “With the addition of Todd’s Trail to the Emmons Preserve trail system, we hope visitors will explore more of the Batson River and Gravelly Brook—just as Todd loved to do. We’d also love to see more fish seeded in the waters to help the local ecosystem thrive. Our hope is that people find joy, peace, and connection on this land—just as our family has.”

KCT board member Arnold Amoroso had this to say about the Todd’s Trail campaign. “The acquisition of this land reminds me of the Trust’s beginnings, where large chunks of land became available that required what seemed a major and daunting effort to acquire them. Years later, the need continues, and the number of dollars required has grown. This parcel provides one of those open vistas that we would painfully miss were it not there, and we would be thankful that another major effort had saved it from whatever change might have sprung up to eradicate it.”



To contribute to the fund to purchase this very special piece of land, please visit our website.

Donations by check can be mailed, with the notation that the money is for the 17-acre Todd’s Trail parcel, to:
Kennebunkport Conservation Trust
P.O. Box 7004
Cape Porpoise, Maine
04014

KCT Welcomes Two New Board Members

Native Mainer Rick Boutilier and his wife Sharon have been married for 41 years and are the parents of four grown sons and grandparents to one granddaughter with another granddaughter on the way.

Rick earned a degree in Business from Northeastern University in Boston and a graduate degree from Bentley University in Waltham. He spent his career in finance becoming Chief Financial Officer at three companies before becoming CEO and Chairman at Intermatic Incorporated in Libertyville, IL where he worked for 21 years before retiring and moving to Cape Porpoise.

“I’ve been visiting family in Kennebunk since the early 1970’s (my great aunt and uncle, Ruth and Ross Stahl, owned the farm on Route 1 in Kennebunk where the Hannaford store sits today), and our sons all learned to sail and swim at KBIA in the early 1990’s,” he said.



A dedicated leader and volunteer, Rick has served on various non-profit boards and was active in Scouts for years with his children. As a person who appreciates the environment and natural beauty of Maine, serving on the KCT board is another way he gives back.

“Living here permanently has exposed Sharon and I to the wonderful trails and work of KCT. When I was made aware of the potential opening for a board seat, I thought it might present a great opportunity to contribute. After meeting many of the staff and board members, I became convinced that the people involved were as impressive as the organization and its body of work,” he said.

David Zgarrick is from Marshfield, Wisconsin, where his appreciation for the outdoors and conservation developed at an early age, growing up exploring the surrounding parkland and woodland located just outside of his family’s backyard. While in high school, he was a counselor at the local school district’s school forest, teaching elementary school students about nature and wildlife.

After high school, David would go on to a career as pharmacist and a college professor, obtaining his BS in Pharmacy degree from the University of Wisconsin - Madison and his PhD from The Ohio State University. His career eventually brought him to Northeastern University in Boston, where he served as a department chair and Dean in the School of Pharmacy.

After David and his wife Michelle moved to Kennebunkport in 2024, they found the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust properties as places to reconnect with nature and to get involved in the community. He explained “We spent three months living in a cottage on Goose Rocks Beach while our home was being built. That was a great introduction to Kennebunkport-walking the beach every day and getting out to see the other KCT properties informed us that the Trust was special and worthy of our support.

David has volunteered at KCT, helping to build trails, perform trail and building maintenance, and working with other volunteers to construct boardwalks and bridges in The Meadow Woods and Emmons Preserves. "I look forward to working as part of KCT’s Board to ensure that these resources continue to be available to our community for many years to come," he said.



KCT Welcomes Two New Staff Members

Juliann Lapierre was hired as KCT's first Property Steward in early 2025.

Juliann is a passionate and energetic conservationist who is excited to spend her time and energy serving as KCT's Property Steward. She graduated from the University of New England in 2024 with a B.S. in Environmental Science. During her academic career Juliann utilized the relationship between the KCT and UNE to get hands-on experience in land surveying, invasive species management, and trail design and construction right here in Kennebunkport.

Having grown up in rural Maine, Juliann had developed her love for nature at an early age. She pursued a career in Environmental Science so that she can share her passion for the environment and ensure that current and future generations have access to experiences similar to those she feels so lucky to have had.

As Property Steward, Juliann spends her time identifying and coordinating stewardship efforts across the board including trail maintenance and development, invasive species management, ecological monitoring, easement monitoring, and general property management and maintenance.

In tandem with her work at the KCT you can find Juliann spending her time with friends, family, and exploring everything that the Atlantic Northeast has to offer.



Photo by Hannah Ingram

Ashley Poirier was hired as Communications and Outreach Manager at KCT in January 2026.

A native New Englander with Maine family roots going back generations, Poirier holds two BA degrees in Psychology, and Sociology/Anthropology. She brings years of volunteer, outreach, and event coordination experience to KCT, and currently, serves on the Board of Directors of the Arundel Conservation Trust and as the Chair of their PR Team.

Poirier's role at KCT includes assisting with the creation and migration of the current KCT website to a new website set to launch early this summer, managing social media platforms alongside KCT staff and interns, branding, creating and editing the annual magazine, developing communication plans and branding for events, and developing systems of communication for members, sponsors, and community partners of KCT.

Ashley resides in Kennebunk with her husband, two young sons, and pets where they spend their time growing their homestead, playing in the backyard, and exploring the trails of all the local land trusts.

Garden Stewards

Kate Adams and Gail Roller

The gardens at the Emmons Preserve are one of the best kept secrets in town. Established in 2004 on completion of the Headquarters building, the entry gardens have been a welcome sight in all seasons. Tulips and narcissi bloom in the spring, perennials flourish all summer and fall, and the beautiful stone work stands to be admired in the winter months. Trees and shrubs adjacent to the parking area have matured to beautiful, healthy specimens.

The gardens you may not be as familiar with are relatively new additions. In 2021 we started work on a perennial bed behind the building, a large raised bed surrounded by a beautiful stone wall built by Brian Fairfield. Planting began in Spring of 2022 and we now have a mature, lush garden full of pollinators all season long. The stone wall, at bench height, is a lovely place to sit and admire the view of the garden and meadows. This project was funded from proceeds of the annual plant sale which has been held in late spring/early summer since 2016. Last year the sale offered over 700 locally raised plants in dozens of varieties.

Spring of 2025 saw the completion of the renovation and reopening of Storybook Trail adjacent to the lower parking area. We have planted and established native plants and spring bulbs throughout the trail and intend to add more each year. New beds have been established at both the entrance and exit paths of the Storybook Trail with the goal of creating sensory gardens. We plan to complete those plantings this spring. This project is a collaborative effort with KHS Alternative Education Program.

The Garden Stewards are devoted to maintaining the gardens at KCT headquarters and we are always looking ahead to future projects designed to enhance the landscape and provide a welcoming environment for all.



**2ND ANNUAL
SUMMER
CELEBRATION**
FOR KENNEBUNKPORT CONSERVATION TRUST

SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2026
4:00 PM – 7:00 PM
BLACKROCK FARM

SIP, SAVOR, & CELEBRATE
WITH FARM FRESH FARE, ART AUCTION & LIVE MUSIC

BLACKROCK FARM
KENNEBUNKPORT, ME
The Nonantum Resort



TICKETS ON SALE NOW!
PROCEEDS SUPPORT THE PRESERVATION
OF LOCAL LANDS AND NATURAL SPACES



ANNUAL PLANT SALE

8AM-11AM ON SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2026

KCT HEADQUARTERS
57 GRAVELLY BROOK ROAD
KENNEBUNKPORT



MAINE-GROWN PERENNIALS READY
TO FLOURISH IN YOUR GARDEN

RAIN OR SHINE | CASH OR CHECK PREFERRED

Thank You to Our Volunteer Stewards

The Kennebunkport Conservation Trust's lands and trails are cared for largely by dedicated volunteers whose work helps keep these special places safe, accessible, and beautiful for the community to enjoy. Through the Island Steward and Trail Steward programs, volunteers play a vital role in protecting more than 30 miles of trails and the Trust's harbor islands, where free primitive camping is offered each year from May through September.

Island Stewards monitor and maintain the Trust's five camping islands throughout the season, helping preserve their natural beauty while creating a safe and memorable experience for visitors. Volunteers travel by skiff from Cape Porpoise Pier to prepare campsites in the spring, maintain trails and fire pits, remove trash and debris, monitor environmental conditions, and close the campsites in the fall. In addition to supporting overnight campers and day visitors, the program offers volunteers a unique opportunity to experience Maine's coastal islands up close while helping protect them for future generations.



Trail Stewards care for KCT's extensive trail network year-round, with most work taking place from spring through fall. Volunteers trim vegetation, clear and blaze trails, repair bridges and boardwalks, and monitor trail conditions across Trust properties spanning forest, fields, and shoreline. No special skills are required, and stewardship days provide both meaningful conservation work and the chance to enjoy time outdoors with others who value the land.

"The overall vision for the KCT trails has always been to develop a safe, accessible, and enjoyable trail system that spans from the deep forest to the shoreline," said KCT Property Steward Juliann LaPierre. "We could not be more grateful for the generosity and care shown by our volunteers."

Whether caring for coastal islands or woodland trails, KCT volunteers help ensure these treasured natural spaces remain protected and welcoming for thousands of visitors each year. For that we are forever grateful.



Trust Events

Kennebunkport Historical Society: The History of Clem Clark Boathouse

Clem Clark Boathouse

Wednesday, June 3 @ 5:30pm

Join KCT and KHS for a conversation and presentation about the history of Clem Clark Boathouse and the Grist Mill.



Discover KCT - Annual Meeting

KCT Headquarters, 57 Gravelly Brook Road

Saturday, June 20, 11a-3p

We are updating the format of our Annual Meeting and you are invited to come discover KCT!

Join us for an immersive open house. Our annual event allows you to visit with our board members, stewards, staff, and community partners while enjoying the grounds, live music, food and drinks.



Fiesta de la Tierra

Seashore Trolley Museum

Friday, August 7

Arundel Conservation Trust, Kennebunk Land Trust, & KCT are coming together to put on a zesty event like no other! A festive, Spanish inspired evening with flair, featuring live Mediterranean fusion music by Sam Lardner and his band, tapas, drinks, a live and silent auction, and MORE!



Annual Plant Sale

KCT Headquarters, 57 Gravelly Brook Road

Sunday, June 14, 8-11a

Our Garden Stewards are pulling together hundreds of plants for you to grow your home garden! All plants are Maine-grown perennials and many are from the Trust gardens. The sale is rain or shine and while cash or check are preferred we can accept all forms of payment.



2nd Annual Summer Celebration

Blackrock Farm

Sunday, June 28, 4-7p

Join us at the picturesque at Blackrock Farm as we sip and savor food and drinks from Nonantum and celebrate summer!

The garden style party is a fundraiser that will also have live music, an art auction, and more.



Trail Fest

KCT Headquarters, 57 Gravelly Brook Road

Sunday, August 9

Pick from a 5k or 10k. The course winds through our beautiful trail system and ends at our headquarters with a party you won't want to miss!

SAVE THE DATE

Fiesta *de la* Tierra

August 7, 2026
at Seashore Trolley Museum

Join us for an evening of tapas, drinks,
and live Latin music!

Silent and live auctions

Hosted by your local land trusts




Kennebunkport
Historical Society

THIS IS YOUR HISTORY.

For more than 70 years, the Kennebunkport Historical Society has been preserving the places, stories, and objects that make this community so special.

From centuries-old diaries and historic photographs to the homes and landmarks we pass every day, our shared history lives here, and it needs your support.



Get involved!

- Attend a lecture or special event
- Become a member
- Volunteer your time
- Explore the stories of your community

Whether you're new to town or have deep roots here, there is a place for you at the Kennebunkport Historical Society.

Join us in preserving Kennebunkport's story for today and for generations to come.

207-967-2751 www.kporths.com

Stay Informed

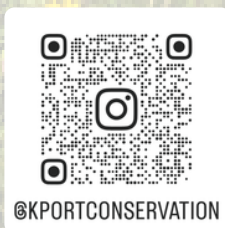
Sign up for our newsletter:



Check out our website:



Follow us:



@KPORTCONSERVATION

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Arundel Conservation Trust

Deborah Delmage



As an "eight year young" land trust, ACT continues to grow and build momentum across many areas, advancing our founding mission, "Connecting Conservation with Community".

In 2025, ACT increased our total acreage to 177.3 acres, with the acquisition of three new properties. Two land parcels, totaling 31 acres, located on Jasper Lane were generously donated by MAKA Builders. Additionally, Marcus Brown generously donated a 0.42-acre parcel on Log Cabin Road. ACT is grateful for these donations and we are thrilled to include these properties in our conservation work.

ACT's flagship property, the Arundel Community Trails is located at 257 Limerick Road, behind the Arundel Municipal Building. This trail system features a 1.6-mile loop, connecting to the Eastern Trail. In 2025, ACT's Trail Blazer Volunteers installed boardwalk sections on the connector stretch between the Yellow and Red loop trail, which improved walking conditions across some of the wet sections. The Roll Um Easy Bike Flow Trail, a favorite for kids of all ages, is steps away from the trailhead and just beyond the playground at the Municipal Building. The ACT Trail Blazers improved the Roll Um Easy Trail by adding a narrow walking path along it, so that parents can easily walk along-side and assist their kids as they learn how to navigate the trail.

Welch Woods Preserve on River Road features a 1/2 mile loops through woods to the shore of the Kennebunk River. During the month of July, ACT sponsored a Story Trail walk along the Welch Woods Preserve trail, featuring the book *The Canoe Maker*, by Jean Flahive and Donald Soctomah. This Story Trail was part of the collaboration of seven neighboring conservation organizations in Southern Maine, who are collaborating to learn about and honor the intersection between land conservation and indigenous communities.

ACT's mission centers around land conservation and community, by connecting with our neighbors, who gather for events in our green spaces and build friendships along the trails. On May 30th, ACT hosted friends and families at our second annual Community Celebration. Mother Nature blessed us with a beautiful spring evening, where we shared pizza, beverages and toasted s'mores around the campfire with our neighbors. The evening included a story time for the kids and a sunset walk to the fairy houses with flashlights.

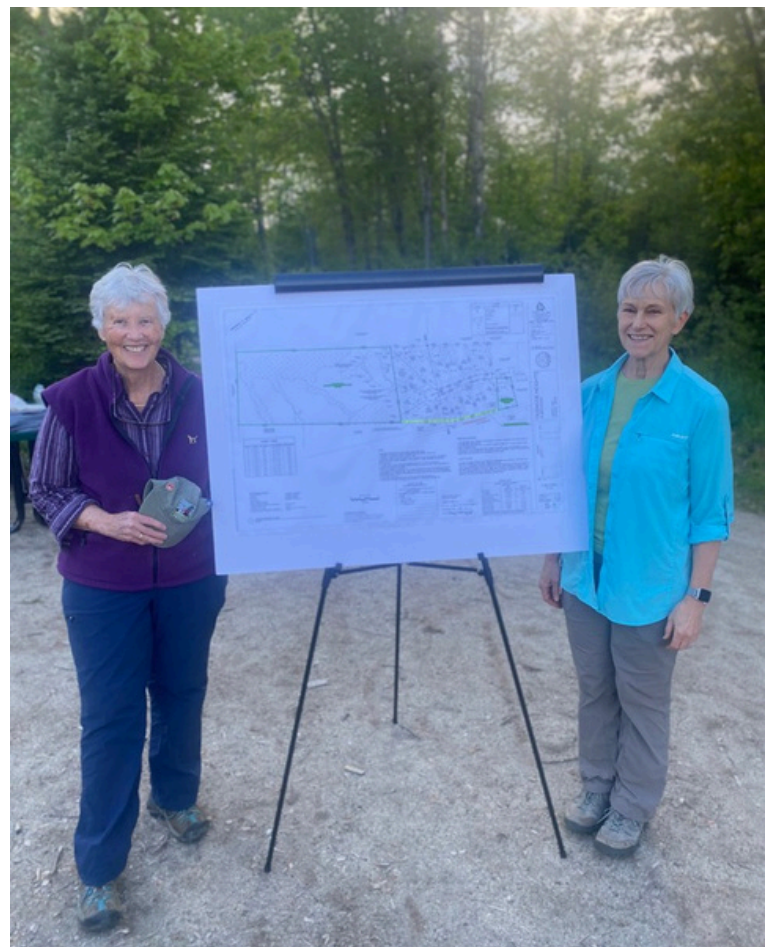
Volunteers are at the center of all that ACT accomplishes and we are grateful for everyone who shares their time and talent to help move our work forward. Each year we celebrate individual volunteers, by recognizing their dedication and contributions through special awards. In 2025, we celebrated:

Volunteer of the Year Award: Bruce Read

Community Heroes Award: Sandy & Ed Nadeau

Above & Beyond Award: Carmen Lessard

Above & Beyond Award: Bill Huston



Arundel Conservation Trust

continued



On July 30, ACT joined our friends at the Maine Seashore Trolley Museum to co-host an Ice Cream Night, scooping up delicious treats for visiting guests. For the first time, ACT partnered with the Maine Outdoor Film Festival and Vinegar Hill Music Theater, to present an evening of wonderful short films. The film festival was well attended and ACT will again partner to host this event on August 19, 2026.

Mid-September is a time of golden sunny days and the annual Arundel Historical Society Heritage Day. ACT was pleased to continue the tradition of hosting the annual Ladies Skillet Toss.

Trail Fest 2025 marked the 5-year anniversary of ACT's largest fundraiser and most popular event of the year. Our 2025 Title Sponsor, Weirs Motor Sales, many other generous sponsors and the help of many volunteers made this event possible. We were thrilled to host 146 runners and youth bikers in the 5k, 10k, and half marathon trail runs.

The Youth Bicycle Race was held on the Roll Um Easy Bike Trail. It was a great community event, including live entertainment, food, drinks, bubbles and pumpkin decorating for the kids and fun for all participants. Mark your calendars for the 6th anniversary of Trail Fest, to be held on Saturday, September 26, 2026.



ACT joined in the celebration for Arundel's Christmas Tree Lighting at Town Hall. It was a very cold clear December night and we kept warm by popping corn for the crowd, while enjoying the carolers and waiting for Santa to arrive.

In 2025, ACT pursued new educational programs, centered around conservation and the outdoors. During the summer months, the Arundel Conservation Trust, collaborated with the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust and the Kennebunk Land Trust to sponsor the Tommy McNamara Challenge. This program was generously funded by the Tommy McNamara Foundation; whose mission is to raise funds to develop and maintain quality recreation and sports for the enjoyment of youth in our community. Our collective program encouraged youth to get out on the trails with their families in Arundel, Kennebunkport and Kennebunk, in a fun challenge. We had great participation and look forward to similar events in the future.

ACT was pleased to sponsor Andrew Young, a graduating Environmental Science major at the University of New England, as an Intern during the fall semester of his senior year. Andy's Intern project was focused on doing background field research to write a Land Management Plan for the Cluff Preserve.

The Arundel Conservation Trust

continued

In 2025, we said a final farewell to two of ACT's founding members, Sam Hull and Jack Reetz. Sam and Jack are two of the six ACT founding members, who came together in 2016, with great energy and purpose. The group's founding vision was to create a space in Arundel, where our community could gather to meet neighbors, have fun and ensure that our children and generations to come, would have a public space to be close to nature.

Sam and Jack's enthusiastic energy and continued commitment through ACT's early years brought ACT's mission of "Connecting Conservation with Community" to life and continues to this day. We are forever grateful to Sam and Jack, for their vision, enduring work and constant friendship to ACT and the Arundel community. While Sam and Jack may no longer be with us, it is our honor to carry forward their legacy through the ongoing work of the Arundel Conservation Trust.

We are grateful to the families and businesses who donated to or sponsored ACT in 2025. We greatly appreciate your generosity and support, helping ACT to provide important public green spaces and trail access points, that keep all of us connected to each other and to the land. We are grateful for your continued support and generosity in helping ACT to "Connect Conservation with Community".

In 2026, ACT is seeking new members and volunteers to help us build a better Arundel, conserving and enjoying our town's "spaces and places" that make Arundel a great community in which to live, work, raise a family, and retire. ACT is seeking folks to join our Board of Directors and our teams, which include: Public Relations, Finance, Land Stewardship (including Trailblazers), Events, Development, Land Acquisition, Education, and Governance.

If you enjoy engaging with a fun group of people doing meaningful work to preserve Arundel's land and build our community, we have a place for you! Please contact us at info@arundeltrust.org or arundeltrust.org/volunteers.

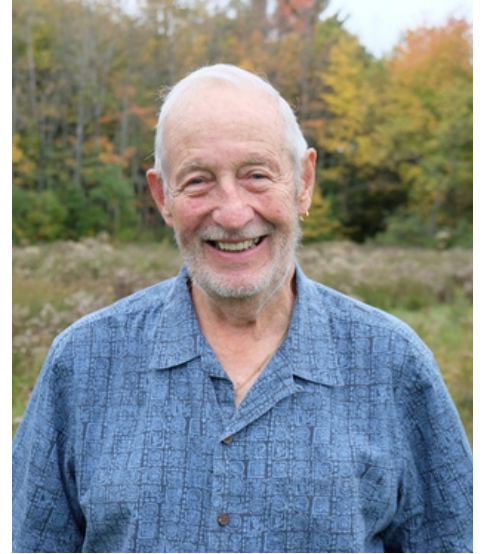


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Ruby Jean Photography, winter image
Volunteers and Board Members, all other images

Rooted in Community, Rising to the Moment

*How The Climate Initiative is turning classrooms into launchpads for local action—
one educator, one community, and one resiliency project at a time.*

The story of the climate initiative began right here in Kennebunkport, born from the forward-thinking spirit of the KCT and a conviction that young people who understand where they live will fight to protect it. Starting with just one school, TCI is now operating in all 50 states and more than 52 countries. TCI has spent the last several years quietly building something that few climate organizations can claim: a national infrastructure for local action. Not a top-down policy but real kids, real teachers, real communities — doing real things.

In Freeport, high school students manage their own Oyster Lease, gaining hands-on experience in sustainable aquaculture, water quality, and the economic vitality of our working waterfronts. Across the state, TCI has inspired numerous invasive species monitoring plots and communications about sea level rise, students working toward climate action plans for their schools. And more educators are joining every season.



—What started in coastal Maine now reaches classrooms across the country. Students in Kentucky coal country petitioned the school board to install solar panels on the roof to charge their laptops with clean energy. Students in Seattle recognized food insecurity in their community and used gardens to green their schoolyard, with excess food going to those in need. Students interviewed community members, made their case to school leadership, and won buy-in. And in Florida, on the Seminole Tribe's Big Cypress Reservation, 49 students didn't just learn about their ecosystem. They built a nature trail through the cypress dome wetland behind their school, working alongside tribal elders to construct traditional chickee structures and collaborating with six tribal departments and community stakeholders to make it happen.

"What we are realizing with the student-led actions that are being taken," said Executive Director and co-founder Leia Lowery, "is that these actions may not be climate actions directly, but are building resilience in communities based on their needs, and more resilient communities are better equipped to handle the changes we are continuing to face."

**These aren't exceptional outliers.
They are the daily output of The Climate Initiative.**



Rooted in Community, Rising to the Moment

continued



The Climate Initiative

The Numbers Tell a Story

TCI has gone from a promising regional program to an international platform.

- **800,000+ students** empowered through TCI programming.
- **30,000+ youth** leading community-based climate action projects.
- **6,000+ educators** have joined the TCI network since 2020.
- **52 countries** now implementing TCI's 11 "Learning Lab" modules.

The organization hit a major milestone with its 5th annual National Climate Educator Retreat. Educators come from across the country for a week of professional development, collaboration, and community. **"I have been given the 'simple' advice of 'just teach solutions' many times,"** wrote one participant, **"but always felt like I was not only out of my depth but also lacking any and every resource to make that happen. This retreat changed that profoundly, and in every way."**



A Platform Built for Educators

Translated into 6 languages and being used in all 50 states and 52 countries, TCI doesn't just hand over curriculum and walk away. In 2024, the organization launched the Educator Climate Action Hub, a digital home base where teachers can access resources, connect with peers, and find support for implementation.

Youth at the Center

TCI's most direct youth program, the Climate Action Leadership Program (CALP) hit a milestone in 2025: it is now fully developed, fully piloted, and producing results. Inspired by and co-created with the late Rotarian John Mathers, CALP trains young people to understand climate problems, identify local solutions, and carry out a climate action project of their own design. Graduates have monitored local waterways, classified wildlife photos for active researchers, and hosted peer education workshops on sustainability.

Train-the-trainer materials are now in development, allowing community partners to bring CALP directly into their own organizations starting in 2026.

Into the Future

The Climate Initiative was born out of the idea that young people who know their place will protect it, with its roots deeply set in the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust. The work that began at the edge of the Gulf of Maine is now happening worldwide.

"We remain committed to building an organization as resilient as the communities we serve," said Lowery, "thoughtful in how we grow, disciplined in how we invest, and always accountable to this mission."



To learn more or support the work, visit [theClimateInitiative.org](https://theclimateinitiative.org) or contact Leia Lowery at Leia@theclimateinitiative.org

Follow @the_climateinitiative on Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

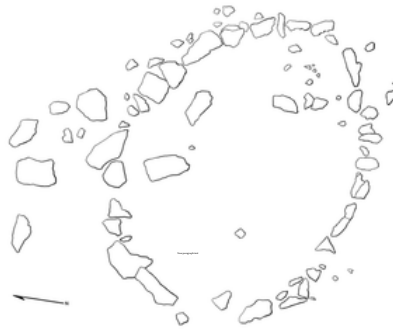
The Cape Porpoise Archaeological Alliance

Tim Spahr

The Cape Porpoise Archaeological Alliance continued research on Redin's Island during the spring, summer and fall of 2025. Site 5.24, as designated by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, was identified in 2019 during archaeological exploration of the southern portion of Redin Island. Working around the restrictions of Covid-19, excavation began again in 2022. A grid-line was established off the unit excavated in 2019 in an attempt unit to determine the size site 5.24. As a result of this research, preserved bone of white-tailed deer and the metacarpal and mandible of a small dog were identified. Pottery sherds and end scraper were suggestive of the Woodland period.



Continued excavation in 2025 uncovered a probable "floor" with hearth, shell deposits and bone and lithic cultural materials. Carbon-14 testing of woody materials, by Beta Analytic located in Miami Florida, indicated a 55% chance the sampled wood fell between 1505 and 1596 AD with a 37% chance the date fell between 1617 and 1665 AD or a about 60:40 probability the site, at that level, was occupied by Native American peoples during the 15 and 16 hundreds. Both dates indicate Contact period or at the time Europeans such as John Smith, Bartholamew Gosnold and Ferdinand Champlain first arrived in Cape Porpoise. Although further Carbon-14 testing is needed at different depths, this site provides a unique look into the time Europeans and Native Americans first encountered each other in Southern Maine.



In addition to work on Redin's Island, a tent ring-like rock feature, located on Cape Island, was also investigated. Excavation within the boundried of the tent ring have, so far, identified fire cracked rock associated with hearth fires. Tent rings of the Cape Island nature, are common to the Arctic and Subarctic but not to our region known as the Far Northeast.

Team CPAA hosted several events is 2025 to include the Maine Archaeological Society's annual meeting at the Brick Store Museum, a Thornton Academy field trip to the Cape Porpoise islands and career day at Sanford Middle School. In addition, recent Skidmore College anthropology graduate, Leah Wimpfheimer, worked with CPAA sharing her perspective and hard work. Expanded research, throughout the Cape Porpoise archipelago, continues to provide information on both the Native American lifeways during the Archaic, Woodland/Ceramic and Contact periods. Work there is planned for several years to come. Redin's Island, like all the islands of the Cape Porpoise archipelago, is preserved, thanks to the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust, and thus provide an unaltered look into Cape Porpoise's past.



Thoughts of Home

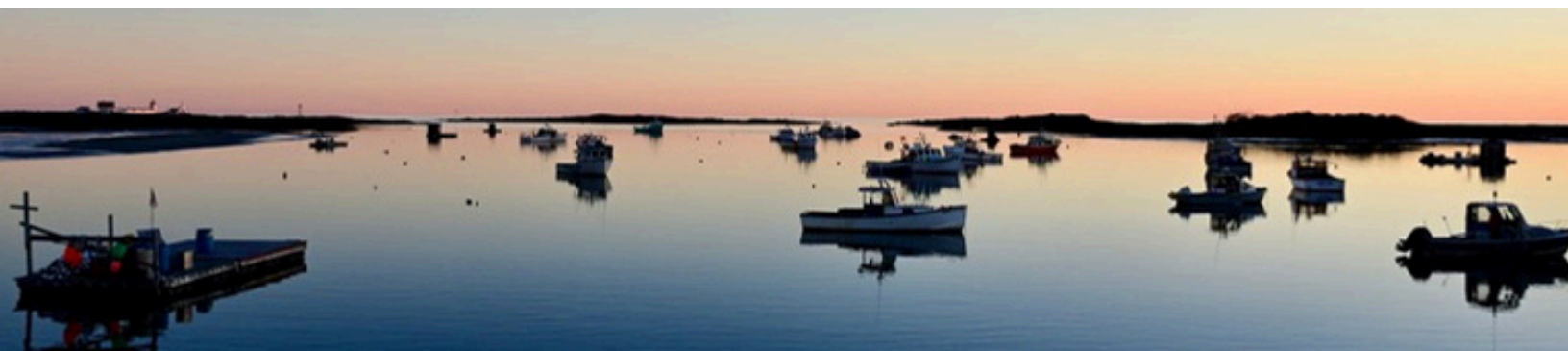
Peter Landry

The back cove and marshland are mine,
In spite of the stroke of a pen
Which holds not the skill to define
By law, nature's gift unto men ...
— Helen Ward Nunan, "A Birthright"



When Cape Porpoise poet Helen Ward Nunan wrote those lines in the 1950s, she was looking out over the tidal marsh that stretched behind her home and store in the building that later housed the Wayfarer, Musette and now Caring Community Cuisine restaurants on the Cape Square. It was also the marsh that stretched out behind my childhood home at 5 Mills Road, and as such it helped launch a lifetime love of nature, diversity and community in my home town. My mother, who looked out on the marsh every time she washed dishes at the kitchen sink, often declared that her view was prettier and more varied than the splashier ocean attractions of beaches and rocky shores. It had personality, subtlety and changed with the seasons, she said, green in spring, golden in summer and russet or brown in the fall. Helen's poem, published in the "Cape Ways" collection to benefit the Church on the Cape, had a wistfulness about it that made its observations all the richer. She could lay claim to her view, yes, but beneath her words was an acknowledgement that owners ultimately controlled what could be done with their land, and individuals who loved nature could only hope that beauty would be preserved.

More than 70 years and so much change later, Helen I think would be both astounded and delighted that preservation of nature's beauty is no longer just a hope and a dream. It is a reality made real by local visionaries who recognized the risks of development at a key moment, pulled up their suspenders, banded together and moved a community to seize the day for conservation before it was too late. I'm talking, of course, about the founders of what became the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust, and the individuals who have kept hope alive for 52 years and counting. The Trust has protected 12 of the harbor's islands, Goat Island Light, access to Goose Rocks Beach and 3,000 acres of woodland, connected by a network of interlocking trails.



Thoughts of Home

continued

What, on earth, would Helen say? Maybe a thank you, as she wrote in her poem “The Cape,” for



The breath of pasture pines so sweet
With island fir and ocean’s spray
[That] are blended in an air that gives
A strength renewed from day to day.
People come and go, buildings rise and fall, but always in the end the land endures.
Geography is eternity, rich and everlasting.
No less an authority than Melville Freeman acknowledged as much, writing in his
“History of Cape Porpoise” that “geography has always had a profound influence on
human beings, shaping their characters and the activities of the places where they
have lived.”
“This ‘Cape,’ as it is called, is not really a cape in the common meaning of the term,”
he added. “... It is actually a group of outward-reaching islands which have the
effect of a cape on the contour of the coast. Had it been otherwise, the story would
be very different.”



Had it been otherwise, the story of the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust would be very different as well. The Cape islands, which defined the contours of the harbor, were what brought the Trust to life and propelled a generation of conservation and achievement. It started, of course, with Vaughn’s Island, saved from a development plan. It continued with the acquisition of Cape and its dramatic cliffs, Trott’s with its picnic rocks, and in a pinnacle of achievement, control of Goat and the lighthouse that has been a beacon and inspiration for nearly 200 years. But the achievement hasn’t stopped there. Success with the islands led to acquisitions of places that speak to heritage and history: the River Green, the Clem Clark Boathouse, Ganny’s Garden honoring former First Lady Barbara Bush. And then there are the trails, 30 miles of trails that allow families to walk the paths long traveled by foxes, moose and bobcats and perhaps indigenous people as well.

Real estate is the elephant in the room for Kennebunkport’s future. Prices have risen into the stratosphere, and familiar, modest homes — once the dwellings of fishing families — have been transformed and enlarged as if on steroids.

The cozy, dormered 1840s house I grew up in last sold for more than \$1 million, and the new owners put more than \$350,000 into a renovation on top of that. Waterfront properties on the Langsford and Pier Roads have been “modernized” and supersized to stunning degrees. The home built by my grandfather on Paddy Creek has been luxuriated to the tune of a \$3.8 million valuation. It would be easy to wring my hands (or smack my forehead) and lament all that has been lost in the Kennebunkport I grew up in.

Thoughts of Home

continued

But at the same time much has been preserved, and that is cause for celebration.

Helen Ward Nunan's store is the same shape it was 100 years ago. The Garrison House is still the Garrison House. Bradbury's market still looks like Bradbury's. And the Main Street house my mother grew up in still boasts the chestnut tree planted when HER mother was born in 1889. More significantly, the land is still the land, permanent and forever, from the Grist Mill Property to Timber Island and Goose Rocks Beach.

I once wrote a piece about a high school romance in which I noted how I could revisit all the islands where I had kissed my girlfriend and find the spots just as they were. "There were the picnic rocks of Trott's, the sunset site on Folly. There was the stony beach on Vaughn's and the rocky ridge reaching back to shore from Green. There was the weathered summer cabin on Bass, long since tumbled into ruin. I imagined I could find each spot right now, and, except for the cabin and the kissing, re-create each moment just as it was."

With the trail system created by the Trust, I could likewise re-create other moments from my past: skating on the pond near the Bradbury Trail just up from the store, hiking land farmed by Jim Steele back country, checking out the dam on Batson's River and following the water to the sea at the west end of Goose Rocks.

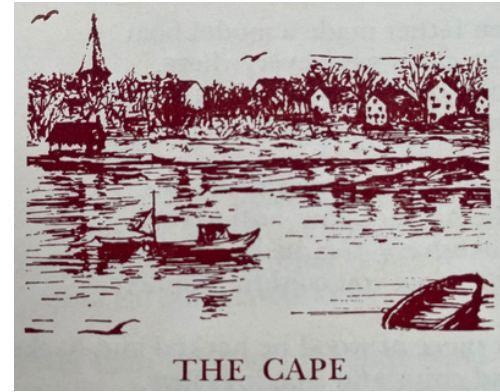
That is the beauty of land. Unless it is assaulted by backhoes and graders, it remains the same as it always was.

I'd like to think that when John Smith or Bartholomew Gosnold first visited Cape Porpoise, the rocks on Trott's were the same shape they are today, the cliffs on Cape hard to maneuver, the gap between Goat and Folly tricky to navigate at the mouth of the harbor.


Stage Island still was pounded by surf on the ocean side, Vaughn's had that pond back from the shore and Timber Point and Island provided a shoulder of protection for Goose Rocks Beach. The inland rivers and ponds still supported peepers and fish, and deer found refuge and food in lush, dense thickets. With care and conservation, the land endures, timeless and beautiful. It connects past generations to those of the present and reaches out to those of the future. It speaks of history and heritage and what defines a community. Like the islands of the harbor, conservation protects us, supports us, enriches us.

That's trust in every sense of the word. For Helen Ward Nunan and us all.

Peter Landry is a writer, essayist and former journalist who grew up on the Mills Road in Cape Porpoise. He is author of an online Substack column "Simple Pleasures for Surviving" and a forthcoming book of the same name.



**We would like to welcome you
to the Church on the Cape**



Sunday Service 9:45 a.m.
ChurchOnTheCape.org

Discover



Join us on the lawn at Kennebunkport Conservation Trust HQ for an immersive open house. Our annual event allows you to visit with our board members, stewards, staff, and community partners while enjoying the grounds, live music, food and drinks.

Saturday, June, 20 | 11a-3p

**Our Cape Porpoise home
across from the KCT islands is
available to rent!**



Weekly Rental

**Dock and
tennis court**

email us: wahwarental@gmail.com

Labyrinth

By Rebecca Bradbury Roberts

**One year, in Kennebunkport
When the world felt loud and tense,
A group of women gathered
To ask "How does this make sense?"**

**We all need a place to go
That feels welcoming and kind.
A place rooted in nature
To restore body and mind."**

**And so an idea sprouted
To collect large rocks and stones.
With help from loving neighbors,
A true labyrinth was born.**

**Every stone was placed with care
To create a walking path;
Mysterious and ancient,
Its design draws from the past.**

**To all those who discover
Its presence amongst the trees,
An invitation extends
To explore or simply be.**

**Some enter seeking answers,
Others walk the path to heal.
Be open to whatever
The labyrinth may reveal.**

**And let its quiet magic
Nourish you beyond this place.
It's not the destination
But the journey that awaits.**

Nick Lewia and Family Take on the Role of Goat Island Lighthouse Keepers



In January of 2025, Nick Lewia, his wife Amy, and their son Brandon became the official caretakers of Goat Island Light, a job that was previously held by by the Dombrowski family. The island and lighthouse were acquired by the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust in 1993, and not only serves an important and essential navigational role, but also is a central part of the Trust itself, available for island exploration year-round and open to the public seasonally with light tower access.

“It’s a unique opportunity, and I can’t say I ever expected to end up here, then again, my career path has never exactly been a straight line,” 40-year-old Nick Lewia said. Lewia was born and raised

in Kennebunk, the youngest of four siblings in a family with deep roots in the community. After graduating from Kennebunk High School, he went to Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston to study Mechanical Engineering. “I quickly realized two things: city life wasn’t for me, and neither was college,” he said. After spending time traveling and working in various parts of the country, he returned to Kennebunk. In 2011 he married his wife, Amy, and in 2014 their son Brandon was born. After other career paths, he purchased Proscap Irrigation and expanded the company significantly. He explained his first introduction to the life of a lighthouse keeper, which may have been a glimmer of what the future would hold. “I was fortunate enough to grow up with Greg and Eric Dombrowski, the sons of Scott and Karen Dombrowski, who dedicated over 30 years to Goat Island Light as its head lighthouse keepers. Without them, the lighthouse would not be what it is today, and we all owe them an enormous debt of gratitude for their unwavering devotion. As a kid, I spent time on the island with them- playing wiffle ball in the front yard, hopping rocks, exploring, getting into trouble, and fixing outboard engines. As kids, we often asked, 'When do we take over?' Scott and Karen always said, 'Never.' Years later, I found myself being invited to join their new program, The Lighthouse Keepers Apprentice Program.”

KCT President Christ Angelos noted, “One of our key missions at KCT is to develop the next generation of stewards for all our properties, especially our signature Goat Island. We are fortunate to have the Lewia family, as Nick's time spent on the island in his youth perfectly aligns with our vision of nurturing future stewards.”

Lewia went on to explain the Lighthouse Keepers Apprentice Program. “My family, along with a handful of other local families, took on week-long summer shifts, learning the ropes of lighthouse keeping. Tasks ranged from mowing, painting, repairing the docks, maintaining the light, caring for the house and outbuildings, greeting visitors, gardening, and anything else needed to keep the island running smoothly. There is always something to be done on Goat Island.



Goat Island Lighthouse Keepers

continued

That first year, we spent our assigned week in July, but Scott quickly realized he had a dependable ‘yes’ on speed dial. Anytime a spot opened, he would call to see if we wanted to cover, and every time, the answer was ‘yes.’ Towards the end of the summer, we were not just filling in here and there, we were spending weeks at a time on the island. Eventually, we found ourselves staying from the last week of August straight through November 3rd, closing the lighthouse for the winter months.” He continued, “From that first summer, and honestly, ever since I was a kid, I was hooked. It is not hard to get drawn into the island’s history, its solitude, and the simplicity of life without constant screens and distractions. It has become one of the most meaningful places in the world to my family, and I am beyond honored to continue this tradition for another generation.”

“Plans for the island,” Lewia said, “include ensuring the continued safety of guests and apprentice keepers, preserving the island’s beauty and charm, and doing everything in his power to ensure that Goat Island thrives well into the future. Our vision is to modernize the island in small, thoughtful ways.”

Lewia noted that he would not be able to take on all the duties of lighthouse keeper without the incredible network of volunteers that Goat Island has been so lucky to have over the years. “From businesses and organizations to Scouting America, to the amazing individuals who just love the island, these people are the heartbeat of Goat Island. Whether it is spring cleanups, mid-season maintenance, or closing in the fall, their dedication is a huge part of why this place has stood the test of time, and we cannot thank them enough. Goat Island has always been, and will always be, a community effort. Our goal is simple,” he continued, “to keep Goat Island safe, beautiful, and accessible to everyone, now and for generations to come. Every change we make will be made with respect for the past, care for the present, and a vision for the future because Goat Island belongs to all of us.”



IMAGES OF KENNEBUNKPORT: Four Seasons of Beauty



Bob Dennis, Photographer | Kportimages.com | @portimages

“We knew that replacing the Dombrowski’s on Goat Island would be difficult.” stated KCT’s Executive Director Tom Bradbury, “But with the Lewias we feel blessed that the island will remain in such good, capable, and caring hands.”

Lewia concluded, “2025 was a year of learning, growing, and hard work, and that is exactly what I love most. I am incredibly proud to be putting my fingerprint on the island’s legacy. I am ready to keep pouring my blood, sweat, and heart into this special place to make sure it stays strong, vibrant, and welcoming for generations to come.

Courtesy photos from Josh McPhail, Kennebunkport Conservation Trust and the Lewia family.

Internships at KCT

Caitlin LaVallee is a junior at the University of New England, double majoring in Marine and Environmental Sciences. During her internship she managed the KCT Instagram account and helped with organizing and facilitating school field trips and environmental events such as the Great Backyard Bird Count. "I wanted to intern at the Trust to see what working in a nonprofit looked like firsthand, and to see how environmental education works in local communities. My goal was to learn how to effectively educate and lead programs aimed at promoting the environment to people of various ages and environmental backgrounds," she said.



Colby MacDormand is a senior Business major at the University of New England. His internship work included connecting local businesses with KCT to help establish long-term working relationships. "I chose to intern at KCT because of the opportunity to expand my knowledge of marketing and management. As a land trust, KCT allowed me to connect marketing to real-world challenges," he said.

"Student interns have brought a great deal of knowledge, a strong work ethic and a fresh perspective to KCT. They have been fun to work with while making valuable contributions to the organization. We are happy to have them, grateful for all they do, and value our University of New England partnership," said KCT Executive Director Tom Bradbury.

My Summer in Maine Working with the CPAA and KCT *Gabriella Calabia*

Two years ago, I read an article about the oldest dugout canoe discovered in New England. I was fascinated. I immediately emailed a man many of us know well, Tim Spahr, who generously shared his time and the intriguing tale about the canoe—the very one housed in the Brick Store Museum. In a series of extremely fortunate events, Tim invited me out to the islands, my college awarded me research funding, and Tom Bradbury and everyone at the Trust generously supported the remaining logistics. Redin's Island became my office that summer. Every day felt like wading through time. I'd built climate maps in labs before and read extensive nautical accounts profusely, but archaeological fieldwork breathed new life into my research and learning. Most days of digging resulted in little more than piles of dirt, sand, and stones alongside empty holes. But occasionally, when sifting through the sand (or scanning on coastline walks, as Tim and Arthur Anderson are freakishly good at), a projectile point or a minuscule flake shaved off in the making of one emerged, perhaps last held in human hands thousands of years ago. Assisting the development of the OceanWorld exhibit at the Museum at the same time visualized the evolving relationship between people and the Atlantic Ocean over the millenia. Yet, clearing mounds of garbage and seaweed from increasingly volatile winter storms and witnessing the erosion made our endeavors immediately urgent to our modern lives, too. We again stand at the precipice of potentially cataclysmic encounters between humanity and the natural world. Back at college, my time on Redin's and work with the CPAA and KCT fueled my studies of how the environment profoundly shapes our experiences, and I cannot thank everyone enough for welcoming me to Maine and the dream job that transformed my life. The unrelenting efforts of the Trust inspire my optimism that we can still chart a new, sustainable course forward for all people on the planet.

Gabriella was a student of Columbia University. She was accepted to University of Oxford for her graduate work. When asked by a professor there about a "transformational moment" she replied "without a doubt" it was her summer in Maine with KCT. We take great pride in all of our interns.





History

Since 1973, the Trust has been preserving special places in Kennebunkport. It began with a threat to our lands. The community worked with us to protect these properties that were in danger of development. With the help of our members, KCT has conserved over 3,000 acres, created over 30 miles of trails, maintained harbor islands for public use, restored a historic lighthouse and boathouse, established educational programs, built a headquarters for community gatherings, and created a special Trust family in Kennebunkport.

Mission

The Kennebunkport Conservation Trust preserves and stewards land to learn from its ecology and history, to protect and restore its diverse habitats, and to be inspired by its natural beauty. We connect people with nature through education and experience.

Community Conservation

The concept of community conservation is sweeping the country and strengthening communities. It is the practice of blending land preservation, stewardship, member engagement, along with education of natural and historical resources into one program. With this approach, the health of both people and landscapes benefit from one another.

Protected and Conserved Lands

The Kennebunkport Conservation Trust has conserved over 3,000 acres of land from development. While many of those acres are protected purely for the preservation of their ecosystems, numerous properties are open to the public for exploration and recreation.

BECOME A MEMBER

Any amount helps us achieve our goals

You can become a member by visiting our website: www.kporttrust.org, scanning the QR code below, or by putting the below information in a note and in the mail it to Kennebunkport Conservation Trust, PO Box 7004, Cape Porpoise, ME 04014



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A Final Word

Tom Bradbury

The KCT staff will tell you that I start many conversations with the words, “in a perfect world”. To me it represents trying to achieve the best possible results from any given situation, to set a standard of excellence, and to then do our best to achieve it. Over the years I’ve come to accept what we all instinctively know, the world is not perfect, and there are times when circumstances beyond our control disrupt the best laid plans. These times we’ve chalked up to experience, learned from our mistakes and moved forward, always forward, for in a perfect world that’s the direction we should be heading.

We didn’t begin this conservation journey with such great expectations. Our first goal was to protect a single island. When that was accomplished, despite more than a few rookie mistakes, the sheer joy and satisfaction of having protected such a cherished place made us conclude, “why not save them all?” And since Goat Island lighthouse was the focal point of the harbor, it was a natural progression for us to decide that we should own that too.

Our thought process was the same after receiving our first Goose Rocks Beach lot. “Let’s try to save as much of the beach as we can.” And after Steve and Natalie Emmons donated their 109 acre farm in the heart of the community the thought crossed our minds that, “in a perfect world we should own contiguous properties from there to Cape Porpoise, and then in the other direction to the Arundel and Biddeford town lines, thus maintaining natural wildlife corridors, while creating the possibility of establishing miles of recreational trails and the physical and mental benefits they would provide for all.

As time marched on our goals continued to develop. When our holdings grew to a size beyond the management abilities of just volunteers, we concluded that in a perfect world, we would have a headquarters building, one that we could be proud of—and we do. We thought that space should be made available to any non-profit group whose work benefits the people of the Kennebunks—and it is. We thought we should create an educational program that would introduce all our children to the wonder and learning that can be found in the forests that surround them—and we did—believing that such understanding would also instill in them a deeper sense of place—which it does.

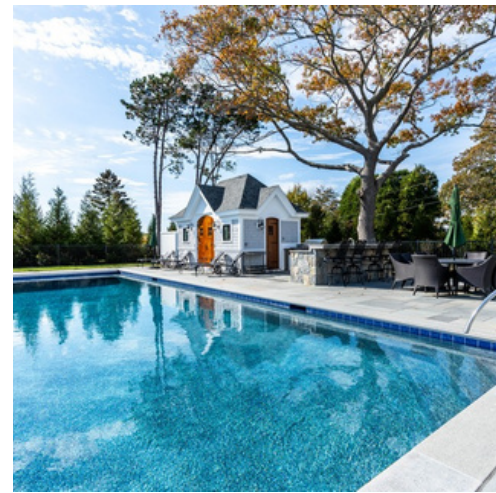
Recognizing that wildlife knows no borders, it came to mind that in a perfect world there would be conservation work being done in our neighboring town of Arundel, so we helped to create the Arundel Conservation Trust, which is now doing wonderful work. Faced with the harsher storms and rising seas that batter our coastal holdings, we concluded that we should create a learning experience that would instill in the next generation the knowledge and confidence to sincerely believe that they could be the agents of change, one that could “slow the rise” of temperatures and tides. By the end of this year, the educational modules of The Climate Initiative, the organization we created to do just that, will have been used by over a million students around the world. And in a perfect world, some of these students will come up with the ingenious ideas that will turn the trajectory of where we are headed—and they will.

This is all, of course, a lot to take in and think about, so let me leave you with just one more thought. All these things and more, built upon the foundation of 50 years of work, are taking place every day in order to forever preserve the beauty and character of this place that you and we love. As a result, not only can we enjoy this wonderful community now, but its outstanding features can be passed on to our children, and theirs, our gift to the future. We are now the stewards of this very special place. In a perfect world, we should all work together, contributing our time, talents and treasure, to keep these good works going. We would be grateful for your support.





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