



# Sheepscoot Log

Newsletter of the Sheepscoot Valley Conservation Association

Fall 2009

## 90 Acres in Whitefield Donated by Haines Family

On a clear, sunny March day, the SVCA's Lands Committee and friends took a walk on a 90-acre property that, out of the blue, had been offered as a donation to the SVCA. Did we want it? The resounding consensus of the 15 snow-shoers and skiers was - Yes!

Walter Haines' family had purchased the property on Vigue Road, just north of Doyle Road, in 1966. Over the years, he and his children had enjoyed summer visits to the property from their home in New York. But as time went by, he and his present wife, Mary Lou Peck, found they weren't visiting the property and wanted to do something to ensure that the property's 2,800-foot frontage on the West Branch of the Sheepscoot River was protected.

The Haines had approached SVCA in 2003 about protection possibilities but decided not to move forward at that time. This year, the time was right. The property is just upstream of the SVCA's Whitefield Salmon Preserve. The State's Department of Marine Resources Sea Run Fisheries has often stated that the Atlantic salmon habitat in the West Branch is among the best



The donated property has 2,800 feet of frontage on the West Branch of the Sheepscoot River which will now be protected forever.

in the Sheepscoot watershed. The Haines' have had the property's forested lands harvested over the years, most recently in 2002, yielding a nice open habitat with varying ages of trees. That winter walk led past a very well-used porcupine den and the west side of the property has been designated by the State as part of a large deer wintering area.

After discussions, the Haines decided to give the property to the SVCA with a great deal of latitude in how the SVCA will protect the land. SVCA has pledged that the river frontage and any important natural resources such as the wetlands on the western side will be protected in perpetuity. The Lands Committee is now reviewing our options, which include the possibility that we might sell all, or a part of the property, after restricting the conservation values with an easement.

SVCA would like to thank Walter and Mary Lou for their great generosity in making this gift to the SVCA and William Logan, Esq. of Soule Soule and Logan for his donation of legal services to the SVCA for this transaction.



SVCA's Lands Committee and friends exploring the property on a sunny day in March.

*Our mission is to conserve the natural and historic heritage of the Sheepscoot Watershed through land protection, habitat restoration, support for compatible land-use patterns, advocacy and education.*



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The Sheepscot Valley  
Conservation  
Association is a  
non-profit 501(c)(3)  
organization.

## From the President: Thanks for a successful 40<sup>th</sup> Year



Dear Members and Friends,

The SVCA's 40th anniversary year has been, by all measures, a great success. The members of the Board of Directors and staff hope that you share our pride in another year well-done. Your support – financially, physically and spiritually – is why the SVCA is one of the most highly regarded land trusts in the State of Maine.

In many ways, this year's activities have typified what the SVCA is all about. Our events – from the Champagne on the Sheepscot to the Turtle Brunch to the summer BBQ – were popular and well attended. We completed three major land protection projects that totaled 297 acres and over 2 miles of river frontage. And, just last month, we opened our first preserve in Jefferson, the Stetser Preserve – 150 acres of forests, wetlands and a hidden pond.

To insure that the SVCA continues to meet the needs of the Sheepscot Valley watershed in the years ahead, the board and staff will be working to update our Strategic Plan in the coming months. While we believe that our mission statement continues to reflect our goals and values, it is wise to periodically take a step back to look at the community at large so we are prepared for any new challenges or opportunities on the horizon. You will be hearing more about the plan in future newsletters.

In the meantime, I hope 2009 has been a good year for you and your family, and that you will stick with us for the next 40 years. On behalf of everyone at the SVCA, thank you very much for your enthusiastic support.

Best regards,

## 40th Anniversary Quilt Winner

Congratulations to Stanley Pratt of Augusta who held the winning raffle ticket for SVCA's one-of-a-kind commemorative quilt.

Stanley's winning ticket was drawn on September 13<sup>th</sup> at the close of the Sheepscot Valley Festival. Although Stanley was not present at the festival he is familiar with the area and was a long-time patron of the Barth Daylilies Farm when SVCA founder Joseph Barth, Sr. cultivated his many varieties of daylilies there, known to this day for their quality, hardiness and beauty.



Quilt winner, Stanley Pratt pictured with wife Jean, their dog Mingo and SVCA's Maureen Hoffman.

## Stetser Preserve in Jefferson

On a beautiful fall day in October, SVCA opened to the public its newest (and seventh) preserve. The 150-acre preserve was generously donated by former resident Janet Stetser who wanted to protect the land from further development, protect wildlife habitat and provide opportunities for low-impact recreation, educational activities and sustainable forestry.



Land donor, Janet Stetser, in front of kiosk built by volunteer Val Thompson, traveled from her home in Arizona to celebrate the grand opening of the new Stetser Preserve in Jefferson.

The property has been selectively logged for the past 20 years and loggers left behind a sustainable, healthy forest. Unique to this property is the unnamed stream and a small manmade pond two acres in size. It was a naturally occurring pond in the late 1800s, but had filled in by the time the Stetser family purchased the property. In the late 1950s, the state was offering help with the design of farm ponds so Janet's father, Leighton, chose to do this and had it completed in 1959. The pond was first stocked with fish by the state Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in 1960.

SVCA volunteers worked through the summer to lay out a mile and a half loop trail through the property's beautiful hilly woods and built a series of bog bridges near the entrance, along with a small parking area and an information kiosk built with funds donated by The First. The Maine Conservation Corps donated a portion of their time to help build the trails and SVCA received a grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to create brush piles adjacent to the trail that are beneficial wildlife habitat. Additional funds came from Fields Pond Foundation and many, many generous SVCA members.

## THANK YOU 2009 VOLUNTEERS!

The SVCA board and staff would like to send our heartfelt thanks to all of the great volunteers that we have the pleasure to work with in 2009. Your dedication is inspiring and your many hours of hard work are greatly appreciated.

We apologize if we have missed anyone - please call the office at 586-5616 and set us straight!

Roberta L. Adlington	Mike Lieser
Connie Arness	Mary McPherson
Sara Balch	Jim & Phyllis McQuaide
Larry Barnes	Susanne Meidel
Joe Barth & Doreen	David & Sharon Miller
Conboy	Roy & Lisa Miller
Nick & Sandy Barth	Paul Mitnik
Gary & Tina Best	Peter Moulton
Denise Blanchette	Lee Murch
John & Donna Bradstreet	Bud Newell
Jack Brown	Mabel O'Brien
Read Brugger	Ken Patterson
Midge Coleman	Chris Pennock
Jim Crowley	Michael & Elaine Pew
Sylvia & Bill Dalke	Alice Phillips
Elizabeth & Gordon Davis	Grace Phillips
Hank & Maryellen	Alan Pooley
DeRuiter	Deborah Poor
Charlene Donahue	Mike & Amy Preston
Kathie Duncan	Alex & Lili Pugh
Wendy Eichler	David Radoulovitch
Judi & Erik Ekholm	Susanna Rice
Hannah Fake	Gabby Rigaud
Tom & Lorna Fake	Susan Russell
Gerry & Suki Flanagan	Benjamin Ruth
Liz Flanagan	Sandy Sage
Judy Fossil	Susan Schubel
Merry Fossil	Greg Shute
Eleanor Goldberg	Kyle Shute
Dorothy Graf	Andrew Slayman &
Betsey Hall	Polina Rikoun
Lucy Harrington	Dan & Claudia Sortwell
Nancy Hartley	Leah Sprague
Tania Hayes	Bob Springhorn
Dede Heath	Dick Sundberg
Richard Helmuth	Karin Swanson
Elizabeth Henson	Lee & Tom Szelog
Jim & Pat Hudson	Gerard Therrien
Melissa Hunnibell	Val Thompson
David Jewett & Linda Bean	Dan & Karyn Townsend
Bambi Jones	Carol Way
Honora Jordan	John Weinrich
Rick Kaselis	Barbara Welch
Elaine & George Keyes	Jean Wood
Audrey Kleinhans	Doug Wright
Molly Ladd	

# 'Champagne on the Sheepscot' Reception & Sheepscot

On September 12, over 100 people gathered at the Wing House in Sheepscot Village to toast the SVCA's 40<sup>th</sup> at the 'Champagne on the Sheepscot' reception. The following warm fall day, people from all over the Sheepscot Watershed and beyond gathered at the Parson's Bend Farm in Alna to enjoy the Sheepscot Valley Festival. Thanks to the support of reception patrons and festival sponsors the events combined raised nearly \$10,000 for SVCA!



Photo courtesy of Natasha Salvio

Paddlers launched their boats at the Festival site and enjoyed a trip down river to Sheepscot Village.



Ready, set, hold on to that egg!



Above - Local Falconer Larry Barnes with his Peregrine falcon. The hood the falcon wears helps keep the bird calm when it is out in public.

## Champagne on the Sheepscot



Photo courtesy of Nick Barish

Top left - Bob Springhorn waits to pour wine for reception attendees.

Top right - Lynne Flaccus contemplating her choice for the photo contest.

Right - Max Jordan and Suki Flanagan performing at the Wing House for the Champagne on the Sheepscot reception.



### Photo Contest Winners!

- First - Susan Russell
- Second - Mary Bowers
- Third - Dick Butterer

Congratulations to the winners of the SVCA's "Peoples Choice" Photo Contest. And thanks to everyone who entered their beautiful images of the Sheepscot Valley. Keep those shutters snapping because rumor has it the contest will return in 2010!

# Sheepsct Valley Festival celebrate our great River Valley



Artist Melissa Hunnibell showcases art she created from images inspired by the Sheepsct Valley.



Volunteers from the Kennebec Chapter of Trout Unlimited giving free lessons on fly rod casting.



Dan Sortwell donated apples from his farm and the day's proceeds from the sale of his Big Barn Coffee.

Photo courtesy of Leah Sprague

## Thank You Festival Sponsors

**Five County Credit Union**

**Ames True Value**

**Damariscotta Bank & Trust  
Alliant Insurance Services**

**AND to the many other friends & donors that made the Festival such a great success.**



The ME Forest Service's Emerald Ash Borer and Asian Longhorn Beetle giving Merry Fossil information on the destructive nature of these invasive beetles.



Photo courtesy of Sandy Barth

Above - Nick Barth, right, sharing a history of the Parson's Bend property before leading a walk with tish carr along the riverfront.



Above - "Sufficient Compliance" makes their debut performance at the Festival.



Left - "Sheepsct Sound Quartet" warming up outside the food tent before their performance.



Master burger flipper, Erik Ekholm.

## In Memory of Charlie Pierce

Charles Albert Pierce, Jr. a long-time attorney involved in drafting the SVCA Charter, Articles of Incorporation, and first By-Laws, passed away at his home in Palermo on August 6, 2009 at the age of 91. Charlie, as he was best known to his friends, was an avid fisherman and hunter with a long-time interest in politics and the conservation of natural resources. In his early years Charlie was active in the Republican Party serving in the Maine House of Representatives in 1946 and 1948. Later he was a judge in the municipal court systems in Augusta and Hallowell. Charlie was one of the first attorneys in Maine knowledgeable about conservation easements and drafted some of SVCA's early easements. He served on the SVCA Board of Directors and was President of SVCA from 1994 to 1995. The SVCA is very appreciative of Charlie's significant and many contributions in the establishment and early years of the organization.



Pictured are (left to right) Champ Humphrey, Ramona Barth, Clifton Walker, Joseph Barth Sr., Elizabeth Rawlings, (unknown), Charlie Pierce and Henry Beerits on "Harp Hill" in the early 1980's. The wind harp once stood on Margaret Dunham Griggs' property in Newcastle. Margaret later donated a parcel of nearby riverfront land that became SVCA's first public preserve.

*Photo courtesy of Nick and Sandy Barth.*

## SVCA wins top prize of \$2,500 in Patagonia's "Voice Your Choice"



Volunteers, board and staff celebrate SVCA's win as the top vote-getter in Patagonia's 'Voice Your Choice' Campaign during the volunteer appreciation dinner on November 7.

## CHALLENGE GRANT OPPORTUNITY!

You have until December 31<sup>st</sup> to have your donations matched - dollar for dollar!

Thanks to the generosity of two SVCA board members, all donations to the 2009 Annual Appeal made prior to Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> will be matched up to a total of \$5,000!!

Don't miss the chance to get more bang for your buck!

## Sheepscot Watershed Pilot Study for Future Kennebec Estuary Survey

SVCA joined a group of local and state organizations to perform a stream corridor survey in the southern reaches of the Sheepscot watershed on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Since clean water is critical to sustaining the region's fisheries, protecting human health, and promoting tourism, the partners are addressing water quality issues in the Kennebec Estuary which includes the Sasanoa and Sheepscot watersheds. This survey work in the Sheepscot was a pilot project for a future survey in the larger Kennebec Estuary next year.

The five streams - Montsweag Brook, Ward Brook, Chewonki Creek and two streams in Brookings Bay, have unknown water quality and poorly documented stream habitat but they are upstream from shellfish areas that are currently closed. The survey data will be used to prioritize protection efforts, work with landowners

to develop solutions, and ultimately protect and improve water quality and aquatic habitat. Survey participants included staff from Maine Department of Environmental Protection and Maine Department of Marine Resources, volunteers and staff from SVCA, the Sheepscot River Watershed Council, students and teachers from Chewonki and the Wiscasset Middle School and Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District.



## Chewonki Semester School Students help out at the SVCA office



Chewonki's Bill Hinkley (right) pictured with (in no order) his son Max and Chewonki semester students Ben, Sara, Matt, Maya, Natalie, and Eliza on the SVCA's new porch roof. The group completed the roofing and yard maintenance as part of a service project.

As part of a service project, semester students at Chewonki's Semester School installed a new porch roof on the SVCA office in Sheepscot Village. Despite the rain on an early October Saturday, the students, led by Chewonki's Bill Hinkley and Lynne Flaccus with help from Bill's son Max, persevered to reshingle the leaking porch roof.

Lynne, a SVCA board member, noted that "A little pizza and hot soup went a long way in helping the students finish the job in the cold rain. They had a good time and for all of them it was their first experience with roofing. They were proud to stay and finish for the sense of accomplishment. Bill was a hero with coordinating and inspecting efforts."

SVCA staff were amazed at how fast the students worked, how wonderful everything looked and how clean they left the worksite. In addition to the roofing the students also trimmed plants and spread compost in the SVCA flower garden!

An enormous thanks to everyone.

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If you haven't renewed your membership for 2009, please do so today!

*Protecting 3,170 acres of land through purchases and conservation easements,  
including more than 15 miles of Sheepscot River frontage.*

## Upcoming Winter Fun

### Treats Wine Tasting to benefit SVCA

Friday, December 11 Time TBA

Treats, 80 Main Street, Wiscasset

### Owl Talk & Walk

Wednesday, January 20 6 - 7 pm

#### “Owls of Maine”

Learn about Maine's fascinating night predators with naturalist Lynne Flaccus and meet one up close.

SVCA Office, 624 Sheepscot Rd, Newcastle

Saturday, January 23 6 - 8 pm

#### “Owl Prowl”

Meet at the Hidden Valley Nature Center gate on the Egypt Road in Jefferson.

Dress appropriate for the weather & bring flashlights.

### Winter Tracking Workshop

Thursday, February 25 6 - 7 pm

#### “Maine's Common Mammals”

Learn about mammals with naturalist Lynne Flaccus by viewing mounts, slides and other materials.

SVCA Office, 624 Sheepscot Rd, Newcastle

Saturday, February 27 10 am - 12 pm

#### “Tracking Animals in Winter”

Meet at the Hidden Valley Nature Center gate on the Egypt Road in Jefferson.

Dress warm and bring snowshoes or skis if desired.