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The Newsletter of the Fracestown Land Trust, Inc.

Fall 2016

**Ted Moulton Donates
73 Acres on Journeys End**

On June 23, 2016, Ted Moulton donated family property on Journeys End Road to the FLT. The property consists of 73 acres on both sides of Journey's End Road and encompasses woodlands, wetlands, a hay field, a small pond, and forested and marshy waterfront on Scobie Pond/Haunted Lake.

FLT has subdivided off the five-acre lot surrounding a residence to sell; and the remaining land will be conserved and managed by the land trust as the "Moulton Memorial Forest." The new Moulton Memorial Forest connects with other conserved land from New Boston Road to Avery Road to expand wildlife habitat. Like all land owned by FLT—and as requested by the donor—the new Moulton Memorial Forest is open to the public.

Long-time home of Spike Cleaves

The Moulton property was home to the late Royal 'Spike' Moulton Cleaves, who lived there his entire life. Ted Moulton is Spike Cleaves' first cousin and only living relative.

According to Ellen Saturley, trustee of



the Cleaves Trust: "The Moulton family bought this beautiful property on Journey's End Road in 1920 for the enjoyment of their family. Ted Moulton spent many happy summers living in Fracestown with his cousins, Brad and Spike Cleaves. Spike became mentally challenged as a result of measles encephalitis when he was a young boy. The people of Fracestown made it possible for Spike to grow up and grow old participating fully in the life of the community. Ted and I hope that the people of Fracestown, to whom we give thanks for the wonderful quality of Spike's life, will be able to enjoy this beautiful property for many generations."

Mr. Moulton remembers that chickens were raised on the property and that it was a "great place to grow up." The

Moulton *Continued on page 2*

Moulton *Continued from page 1*

Moulton family business, now known as Moulton Ladder and Supply Company, is the oldest ladder company in the United States. It was established in 1839 and was the first manufacturer of wooden ladders in the country. The vacation home became a primary residence and family farm for Phyllis Moulton and family. Her son, Royal Moulton Cleaves, was born in July of 1940 and contracted measles, and subsequently encephalitis, at age six. The disease caused some brain damage and a trust was established for his care, which enabled him to live at his home with a series of caretakers until his death in February 2016.

Spike was a familiar sight to Francestown residents as

he walked all over town raising money for cancer research in honor of his mother, Phyllis, who died of the disease. One resident remembers driving Spike home from the outskirts of town at the end of a long day of fund raising.

FLT Chair Chris Rogers credited Ted Moulton, Ellen Saturley, and Scot Heath, who facilitated the transaction, with making the generous donation possible.

When enjoying the beautiful new Moulton Memorial Forest property, FLT hopes residents will remember Spike—especially his positive approach to life and his tireless efforts to raise money to cure cancer.

Larry Ames

FLT Open House Showcases Moulton Memorial Forest

With the opportunity to see the family Moulton home, with its century long history and connection to many Francestonians, as well as to walk the property with a guide; friends of the family and others attended an FLT open house at the new Moulton

Memorial Forest property on August 13, 2016.

Visitors parked on the large expanse of lawn of the newly acquired gem of a property, which is nestled along Journeys End Road and Scobie Pond.

Drawn in through any one of the home's many open doors and welcomed by FLT members eager to share this house, its stories and history; guests wandered on their own. Photos, spread on the dining room table, as a nod to Spike Cleaves' lifetime spent in the house, sparked interest and attempts to match names with faces. The magnificent house, with its thirteen rooms, fascinating basement, and wonderful views, came alive—with floor boards creaking and voices filtering through the rooms. Bouquets of flowers toasting summer's best blooms and other goodies from the garden, including cherry tomatoes and blueberries, along with cheese and crackers, cookies, and apple cake, kept people happily visiting.

A dozen or so of the guests joined Ben Haubrich and Betsy Hardwick on an informative and expansive



walk around the property, which includes a number of farm building foundations from earlier times. At a casual pace, with many opportunities to stop and poke around, the group walked out across the back gardens, onto a woodland path and then through an open field to the edge of a wetland pond. Skirting extensive

swamp habitat, strollers caught views through scrub to Scobie Pond, then started an upward climb along tall stonewalls, and then headed down to follow a lovely stream before popping out of the forest and back to the house from a different direction. A quick rain shower at the end of the tour didn't dampen spirits.

All who partook in the Open House appreciated what a fine and generous gift the Moulton family has given to Francestown.

Hannah Proctor

SPECIAL THANKS! *FLT board members and other volunteers, led by Betsy Hardwick and Hannah Proctor, put in many days of hard work to empty and clean the house, tidy up the grounds, and make necessary repairs to ready the property for showing. Special thanks to Jeff Tarr for his chain saw skills and removing trees and fencing from the property, and to Don Elliot and Avis Moeller for helping make the transition an easy one.*

Discover the Secret Lives of Wild Cats

Susan Morse, founder of the Keeping Track organization, will present “Wild Felids of North America” at the next Joan Hanchett Nature Series, at 6:00 pm, Monday, November 21st at the Frankestown Elementary School.

The award-winning photographer and wildlife expert will share stunning images and fascinating information about the lives of North America’s wild cats, including bobcat, Canada Lynx, cougar, jaguar, and ocelot.

Susan Morse is highly regarded as an expert in natural history and tracking throughout North America. Her workshops on wild felids and other carnivores are favorites with the general public, conservation leaders, and professional biologists.

In 1994, Morse founded Keeping Track®, an organization devoted to training professional biologists and citizen scientists in wildlife monitoring skills to detect, record, and monitor the status of wildlife and wildlife habitat. Over the years, the organization has trained thousands of volunteers representing hundreds of communities across Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts,



Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Florida, Arizona, California, Washington State, British Columbia, and Quebec. Data collected by the Keeping Track teams has influenced the conservation of over 30,000 acres of habitat in twelve states and Quebec.

In 2001, Morse received the Franklin Fairbanks Award for her lifelong creative and dedicated service to enriching

the awareness and understanding of the natural world among the residents of New England. More recently, Morse and Keeping Track were recognized by the Adirondack Council for decades of conservation work in the Champlain basin bioregion.

Ms. Morse authors a regular column on wildlife in Northern Woodlands Magazine. Her work has also been featured in many other publications, including Smithsonian, Audubon, Amicus Journal, Forest Magazine, Wild Earth, Vermont Life, Adirondack Life, The Nature Conservancy, and Ranger Rick—as well as on National Public Radio’s Morning Edition. Morse’s life work and photography is highlighted in *The Woods Scientist* by Stephen Swinburne (Houghton Mifflin, 2002).

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Sound Conservation Benefits Everyone: Food, Energy, Sense of Place, Recreation

- **Reduces government expenditures**, for example, wetlands retain flood waters, reducing the cost of road repairs; wetlands slowly release retained rainfall, feeding streams in time of drought; forests and wetlands filter and purify water that otherwise would have to be done by water treatment plants; forests offset the impact, and therefore the future costs, of climate change, by absorbing carbon.
- **Supports sustainable and renewable LOCAL resources**, such as energy sources and agriculture.
- **Supports our local economy** through related jobs such as tourism, agriculture, and timber harvests.
- **Provides educational opportunities and convenient recreation**, such as hunting, hiking, skiing, swimming, boating, and riding.
- **Provides the open spaces** that give us our sense of place, our sense of local character and culture, in the face of increasing development.

Threatened Plant Protected

While looking for the boundary-markers of one of our FLT properties we found strange-looking, brownish plants growing singly and in clumps. They looked like vertical pinecones approximately 6 inches high by 1 to 2 inches wide. The plants turned out to be American Cancer-root or Bear-corn (*Conopholis americana* (L.) Wallr.), a native, perennial, parasitic species listed as threatened in New Hampshire (per http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/plant-of-the-week/conopholis_americana.shtml).

Cancer-root is totally parasitic on tree roots, especially on certain oak species in rich shaded forests throughout the eastern half of the U.S. and Canada. It has no chlorophyll and is cream-colored when young,



American Cancer-root or Bear-corn (Conopholis americana (L.) Wallr.)

turning dark brown-to-black as it ages. Most of the plant is invisible and consists of roots that cause the formation of underground, rounded knobs on the roots of trees from which Cancer-root gets all its nutrients.

At maturity, usually in spring, visible, upright stalks bearing cream-colored flowers are formed at the ground surface.

Flowers are pollinated by bees and other flying insects and the resulting seeds appear later in the season.

Reports indicate that Cancer-root provides food for wildlife, particularly deer and bears.

It is comforting to know that our efforts in protecting land are also contributing to the protection of this fascinating and threatened species.

Martine Villalard-Bohnsack

Fisher Featured at FLT Annual Meeting

The annual FLT meeting was held on June 9, 2016. After a reception and short meeting to approve Board Members, keynote speaker Susie Spikol Faber, from the Harris Center for Conservation Education, presented “True Tales and Times of New Hampshire’s Fisher.”

The talk was a dynamic, enthusiastic, and loving view of a much maligned and elusive carnivore. Spectacular photographs and preserved specimens from



Susie Spikol Faber and friend.

the Harris Center added to the experience.

It turns out that the Fisher, often called Fisher Cat, is not a cat, rarely eats fish, and does not deserve its nasty reputation. Indeed, studies of Fisher stomachs suggest that fishers rarely attack house pets—and that bobcats and coyotes are more likely culprits. At the end of the evening, members left with an en-

tirely different and more positive appreciation for this graceful and secretive animal.

Martine Villalard-Bohnsack

The Chairman's Letter

When I drive home to Frankestown, I pass through a largely forested, rural landscape. So the question becomes: Why do I, and the other supporters of FLT, work so diligently to further land conservation?

While I can't speak for everyone's motivation, I will venture that many of us derive great pleasure from knowing that we live where bear and moose find the space to roam, where otter and native brook trout ply our streams, and where endangered turtles still can survive. We know that to keep this wildlife in our backyards, we must protect the habitat that wildlife depends on.

Recently, I gained insight into just how rich this habitat is from the background information compiled for a current FLT conservation project. We are working to conserve an almost-100-acre, currently vacant parcel that impressively contains about 40-acres of "Highest Ranked Wildlife Habitat in New Hampshire" and about 50-acres of "Highest Ranked Wildlife Habitat in the Region" as rated by the state's New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan. Otter, moose, fisher, bear, mink, bobcat, weasel, and native brook trout have all been observed on the property.

How lucky we are to have such healthy, life-supporting habitat in our area--and how important it is that this habitat continue to be protected and thrive in the years to come!

To be clear, our mission at FLT is not to oppose development; rather, it is to help make sure development is located in areas that do not threaten our valuable wildlife habitat. More specifically, we focus our efforts in Frankestown on the areas that the town has identified as important open space, per the "2013 Town of Frankestown Conservation Plan." I encourage everyone to read this plan, which is on the town website at frankestown-nh.gov.

For your generous and ongoing support of FLT and its efforts to conserve habitat, we thank you—and the wildlife of southern New Hampshire thanks you, too!

Chris Rogers

Frankestown Arts Fest Celebrates 4 Years

On June 25, FLT sponsored the 4th Annual Frankestown Arts Fest, celebrating the natural beauty of Frankestown with paintings, arts, crafts, song, dance, and poetry. The event showcases the many different talents of artists from and around Frankestown.



Above: Anne Clark's beautiful fine jewelry was a hit. Right: Meaghan Farrell performs; Jan Hicks' quilt provides a beautiful backdrop.



Above: Suzanne McGettigan's performance is an annual favorite. Right: Ted Graham on clarinet.





**FRANCESTOWN
LAND TRUST**

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Don't Miss This Upcoming Event!

**Wild Felids of North America
Joan Hanchett Nature Series
Monday, November 21, 6:00 pm
Francestown Elementary School**

Join us for lots of fun and fascinating information about the secret lives of North America's wild cats, including bobcat, Canada Lynx, cougar, jaguar, and ocelot. Sue Morse has spent nearly 40 years studying and filming these elusive animals. Her extraordinary photos and interesting stories are both entertaining and enlightening. Please turn to page 3 for more information.

Sponsored by Francestown Land Trust, George Holmes Bixby Memorial Library, Francestown News, and the Francestown Conservation Commission.

**Discover the Secret Lives
of Wild Cats**



Do you have questions about or ideas for events?

We welcome your input! Please send an email to info@francestownlandtrust.org

**Join our email list to learn about our upcoming events.
Contact us at info@francestownlandtrust.org to be added to this list.**