



Meets & Bounds

News about conserving Richmond's landscape, natural resources and rural character

Summer 2017

In this issue:

- Town Acts to Help Save Gillett Pond
- Conservation You Can Eat - and Listen To
- An RLT Preserve Becomes a Science Lab
- Kayak Congratulations

Have you renewed your RLT membership?

Town Acts to Help Save Gillett Pond

The Richmond Selectboard voted last month to put \$150,000 toward giving Gillett Pond a new lease on life by replacing the aged dam now holding back its waters. The project is estimated to cost \$750,000.

Richmond's contribution will come from the Town's Conservation Reserve Fund, which voters created to help finance important conservation projects like this one.



The Friends of Richmond Land Trust and the Richmond Land Trust are now working with other sources, both public and private, to raise the funds needed to save the popular landmark.

For example, we've applied to the Town of Huntington, which shares the pond and its wetland ecosystem with Richmond. Huntington has its own conservation reserve fund, and we've asked the Town to commit \$100,000 from the fund to the effort.

Gillett Pond has been a key part of the local landscape since it was created in the mid-1800s to supply water and power. As those needs faded, it became a haven for wildlife, a recreational magnet and a scenic treasure. When the previous owner sought to tear down rather than replace the dam, the Richmond Land Trust and Friends of Gillett Pond raised enough money to purchase the property and have engineers design a new dam to meet today's safety requirements.

People from Richmond and Huntington alike have come together to plan activities and support Gillett Pond's rescue. The more who help, the better the chances that pond can be saved. We need your talents and know-how, too, so please join this very important effort. Simply drop a note to SaveGillettPond@gmail.com and we'll be in touch.

Conservation You Can Eat - and Listen To

Owl's Head Blueberry Farm is open for another season of picking and picnicking, thanks in part to an agreement through the Richmond Land Trust to conserve the land for agriculture and the subsequent purchase of the property by Ryan and Rachel Gray.

The farm was run for 38 years by Larry Copp, Pat Weaver, and Jon and Pat Downer. They donated a conservation easement on the property to ensure the long-term protection of its fertile upland soils and other environmental features important to sustaining local agriculture production, as well as the town's and neighborhood's rural character.

Ryan and Rachel report a "bumper crop" this year, and they're also preserving the pick-your-own operation's tradition of free, live music nights for customers. The entertainment schedule includes The Decoys (Aug. 1), The VT Bluegrass Pioneers (Aug. 3), Blues for Breakfast (Aug. 8), Hot Pickin' Party (Aug. 10), Doug Perkins (Aug. 15) and Two Cents in the Till (Aug. 17).

More information on the farm is available at owlsheadfarm.com.

RLT Preserve Becomes an Outdoor Classroom



Seventh-grade science students at Camels Hump Middle School spent a good part of the last school year immersed in the natural functions of RLT's Willis Hill Preserve. Students in David Jensen's and Anna Kovaliv's classes [inventoried](#) nearly 50 flora and fauna species living in the preserve, just a short walk from their school. Their research was also used in [an assessment of the preserve](#) by the University of Vermont Watershed Alliance program, which works with schools to increase understanding of watershed issues by Vermont's youth. Jensen and Kovaliv met with RLT's Willis Hill Management Committee to explain their work and outline plans for ongoing research during the 2017/2018 school year.

Kayak Congratulations - and Thanks to All

RLT board members and friends were busy on at Volunteers Green on the Fourth of July after the parade serving up lemonade and tickets to our annual kayak raffle. It's a major fundraiser for our all-volunteer non-profit, helping us gain the money we need to pay for the upkeep, taxes and insurance on our public nature preserves throughout town. Robin Yandell of Williston was the winner in the kayak raffle. Big congratulations and happy paddling to her - and thanks to everyone who came by for lemonade, raffle tickets and to say "hello."

Summertime Fun in RLT Preserves

[Beeken Rivershore](#): Ramble through a cool, lush fern forest
[Lower Huntington River Gorge](#): Swim and wade in pristine pools
[Safford Preserve](#): Join the birds in picking raspberries
[Gillett Pond](#): Watch otter, heron, and other wildlife from the shore or by kayak and canoe
[Bombardier](#): Cast for trout in the mighty Winooski
[More preserves, more info:](#)
richmondlandtrust.org/preserves

Please Update Your Membership

Open space brings Richmond many advantages. We hope you'll recognize the benefits we share by renewing your membership in the Richmond Land Trust. Your dues will help us pay the ongoing tax, insurance and upkeep costs on our preserves. And you'll also be helping conserve new parcels needed to keep our surroundings healthy and beautiful.

Please send your fully tax-deductible membership donation today to RLT at the address below. Or make your gift online at richmondlandtrust.org/support. And thank you!



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