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Above: Jeff Backer and Dave Viola at Short Creek Farm in Northwood, NH.

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Right: Carl Wallman  
COURTESY PHOTO

## Neighbors Beyond the Hill

For Carl Wallman, harmony was found in the stewardship of his land, the creative exchange of ideas, and the opportunity to share a legacy like no other with future generations of farmers.

**T**he root of Carl Wallman's love of land is deeply intertwined in his Jewish heritage and can be traced back to Russia, his family's ancestral home. But his story starts with his father...

### Manhattan

All Frank Wallman had was a suitcase when he stepped off the boat to make a new life in early 20th century New York City. That suitcase represented the total of all of his worldly possessions, but for him, a Russian Jew, just the promise of a brighter future was more than enough to root him in his new home. And anything would be bright compared to where he came from, where Jewish persecution was the norm.

But a new norm eventually started to take shape. Frank started a linoleum business that churned enough revenue to allow him to purchase a few small apartment buildings (had for a song thanks to the pre-World War II real estate landscape). He saved his money, stewarded his holdings, and slowly, painstakingly carved out a good life for his wife and two sons – one of whom was Carl Wallman, born in 1944.

As he grew older, Carl cut his entrepreneurial teeth on his family's business ventures. Following his father's death in the 1960s, Carl arrived at a crossroads. He had money now, thanks to his inheritance, but was directionless. Carl's uncle encouraged him to shift his attention to acquiring that which was most rare to Eastern European Jews: land.

So while the Big Apple had been good to the Wallmans, Carl set out for New Hampshire, in search of property he could call his own. When he arrived in the Granite State, he picked up the first newspaper he found, combed through the real estate section, and found a listing for a property in Northwood called Harmony Hill Farm.

That would do.



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## Neighbors Beyond the Hill continued from page 1

### Short Creek Farm

It's an unseasonably warm November day in Northwood, breezy and sunny, with only a faint of autumn chill; fleece-vest weather, maybe a hoodie, but that's it. Not a bad day to see what's happening at Short Creek Farm.

Known for its high-quality pork products, Short Creek is a working pig farm, founded in 2015 and operated by business partners – and high school friends – Jeff Backer and Dave Viola. Jeff, the farmer, and Dave, the food processor, have tag-teamed for the last five years creating fresh sausage, salami, bacon, pork chops, and ferments.

Jeff and Dave are in the field today, welcoming a gigantic grain shipment, which has stirred the pig herd, calling to their taste buds (which are pretty much on red alert all the time). Pigs of all shapes, sizes, and breeds navigate the fenced thoroughfares, oinking, digging, rolling, and slipstreaming their way through life.



Another busy day at Short Creek Farm

© JERRY MONKMAN, ECOPHOTOGRAPHY, LLC

Such is the sight at Short Creek – lots of activity, lots of mud, and a pasture littered with giant rocks (these pigs have a nose for excavation, which will help aerate the churned soil for future green rebirth). At Short Creek, it's nonstop agricultural action, all carefully designed to produce the highest quality meats.

While Jeff and Dave have this all down to a science, they both arrived at Short Creek from different starting blocks.

Jeff didn't grow up as a farmer. In college he studied conservation biology and ecology and eventually made the shift to a more hands-on experience.

"At some point I said to myself I could just do the farming, instead of studying it," he says.

In 2009 Jeff rented a small space to kickstart a vegetable garden and grow veggies for his co-workers – "Testing out farming," as he describes it. After two years of apprenticeship on other farms, he started his own one-acre vegetable farm, eventually bringing on cattle grazing and, later, about 30 pigs. That was when he and his old friend Dave began to seriously discuss going into business together.

For Dave, he followed a similar track as Jeff – biology major in college who took on sausage-making as a hobby, until realizing he had a knack for food processing.

"We just started having conversations about good quality processing available to small, local farms," Dave says. "That was where the seeds of this idea took root."

They just needed some land to make this vision a reality.

### Harmony Hill

Like his father, when Carl moved into his new home at Harmony Hill Farm, he brought with him very little except a deeply curious nature and work ethic that ran on nuclear fission. Those first few years at Harmony Hill were exercises in trying, failing, reevaluating, restarting, and, ultimately, succeeding. In fact, succeeding to the point where he became a force in the U.S. cattle industry.

"He was the most accomplished breeder of Angus cattle in the country," says Peter Lamb, Carl's long-time friend and advisor. "He would go to Texas, and the breeders down there with their big hats would ask 'Who's this guy?'. But he always knew his stuff."

The success never dulled Carl's edge for curiosity. Even as he accumulated more and more acreage and expanded his holdings, he was relentless in his pursuit of knowledge – particularly how it related to a human's relationship with land.

"He was driven by his curiosity and an almost relentless need for discovery," Peter says. "It was his character that allowed him to continually search for a better way. It was that search that brought him closer and closer to understanding the importance of land."

"He had a clear vision of where he wanted to go," said Steven Cohen, Carl's friend. "A lot of the time he didn't know what exact route to go, but he always figured it out. He lived within his beliefs."

Through this discovery process, Peter watched Carl arrive at two core truths specific to his personal journey. The first: effective land management was found not in trying to bend the land to your will, but working in *partnership* with it – knowing what and where to plant, knowing what and where to cultivate, knowing what and where to clear. (It is apropos that his farm was called Harmony Hill.)

And while this first truth led to ecological and professional fulfillment for Carl Wallman the farmer, the second truth may have had a more profound impact on Carl Wallman the man.

"Through his own internal discovery, he came to understand more about his cultural and ethnic background," Peter says. "His people had been dispossessed of land. And he had finally arrived at a place where he had accumulated a great amount of land, without knowing he was acting as a counterbalance to his own family heritage."

"That became so important to Carl," says Fran Berman, Carl's partner. "His family had been thwarted from owning their own land, so it was a big impulse within the Wallman family to become landowners in their own right, to have that kind of control over their world."

In 1994, Carl sold his Angus herd and moved to Graylag, an old basketball camp that had been run by Celtics great Bob Cousy in the 1950s. Located on Wild Goose Pond in Pittsfield, it was here where Carl pivoted into the next phase of his landowning life, one of community connection and advocacy of the truths he had learned. And like most events of consequence in Carl's life, it all started over a potluck.

In 2006, following many conversations over the dinner table (Carl's preferred business milieu), he and his friend and peer Jim Oehler created the Northwood Area Land Management Collaborative (NALMC). The group's mission: "Working across our stone walls."

*continued*



Aerial view of Short Creek Farm. © JERRY MONKMAN, ECOPHOTOGRAPHY, LLC

NALMC became a clearinghouse of conversation and concepts, where local landowners band together to exchange philosophies and pragmatism about what it means to work in concert with their land – to surmount the physical (and social) stone walls that may have cordoned them off from each other for so many years.

“It was about a shared land ethic,” Peter says. “It was about learning to care for land in different ways. In sustainable ways.”

### Short Creek

Generally speaking, the prospect of an independent farmer generating the capital needed to outright purchase open space in New Hampshire is an uphill climb. It’s cited again and again in SELT’s discussions with farmers – land is expensive and hard to come by on a farmer’s income.

Market-rate property values, even those subject to a conservation easement, and – particularly in a locale that is less than an hour removed from the ocean and the mountains and within commuting distance to Boston – can be so enormous as to curtail hopes of ownership.

“From an agricultural, environmental, and business perspective, Dave and Jeff are doing everything right,” says Jeremy Lougee, SELT’s Conservation Project Manager and Farmland Coordinator. “But sometimes doing everything right just isn’t enough. We’re just not quite at a place yet in society where most people understand the true value of local food production and the environmental resources – and necessary financial capital – that are needed to sustain it.”

So what options were available to Dave and Jeff to see their vision take shape? The answer to that question lay in Carl Wallman’s life journey of discovery and reflection.

For the past five years, Dave and Jeff have been leasing the land at Harmony Hill Farm, allowing them access to the acreage they need at an affordable cost and giving them the chance to build a client base, a reputation, and momentum to carry them to a sustainable operation.

“Carl was a little skeptical of us when we showed up,” Jeff says, laughing.

“Pig farming was new to him and he wasn’t familiar with our

approach,” Dave says. “But he eventually came to understand that Jeff puts in an incredible amount of effort to take care of the land and that resonated with him.”

It was a solid and symbiotic owner/tenant relationship, but there still remained an inexorable barrier between what Short Creek was and what Short Creek could be if land ownership were a possibility.

“Without ownership or some kind of very serious long-term lease it’s tough,” Jeff says. “For the kind of stuff we’re talking about, raising livestock in a way that is efficient and provides for the health and wellness for the animals, you need infrastructure and long-term improvements. That costs a lot and – you can’t take it with you.”

Enter the “OPAV” – the Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value.

“Carl was curious about how he could ensure that Harmony Hill remained a working farm, affordable and accessible not only for Dave and Jeff, but for future farmers,” said Jeremy. “We sat down with Carl and explained the concept of an OPAV. He thought it made a lot of sense.”

“Not only was Carl able to get the land into Jeff and Dave’s hands at a more affordable value,” Jeremy says, “but the OPAV and conservation easement together ensure that the lands will remain affordable to qualified farmers in the future.”

### Graylag

Carl was at Graylag when the cancer came.

He was diagnosed in 2004, went through chemotherapy and forced it back into remission. Ten years later the cancer reemerged with a vengeance. Despite a terminal diagnosis, Carl never lost sight of what illuminated him in the first place – the clarion call of land and its preservation.

“His whole cancer journey took place at Graylag,” Fran says. “He found nature to be very comforting throughout.”

Pick a clear day at Graylag and there was a more than excellent chance you’d find Carl astride an excavator, motoring across his property, digging into the dirt, peeling back layers of flora, and undertaking his favorite pastime: revealing the stone faces of ridgelines.

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# Daydreaming Out Loud

How the cross-country, agricultural vision of two independent organic farmers became a reality.

The moment you set foot onto Clyde Farm there's an excellent chance the farm's namesake will bound up to you, tail wagging, tongue lolling, eager to welcome you to his stomping grounds.

Clyde the dog is happy you're here!

Also happy you're here – Jimi Tutor and Kristen Klenow, Clyde's owners and the owners of Clyde Farm, a small organic food and flower producing operation in Farmington, NH.

Jimi and Kristen have carved out a solid foothold in the local organic farming game, providing fresh cut vegetables and flowers, as well as organic eggs, chickens, and lamb. Kristen handles the plant and veggie sides of things, all of which are USDA Certified Organic, grown in their own potting soil and compost (used bedding from their own livestock).

Speaking of livestock, Clyde Farm's animal production – Jimi's focus – is also Certified Organic. The chicken broilers – a calling card of Clyde's – are raised in mobile pods, which are moved daily to give the chickens fresh pasture to cycle through (and in turn delivering healthy poultry that can gulp in the fresh air and green grass, healthy soil thanks to a never-ending bounty of chicken manure, and all-around efficient energy consumption). Plus, the farm-roaming chickens stockpile protein and vitamins with all their outdoor activity, lending a hearty taste to the meat.

While Clyde Farm has been embraced by the community and Jimi and Kristen are finding success as independent farmers, the road to Clyde Farm – and a pathway to ownership (more on that later) – was a winding journey.

Originally from California, Jimi and Kristen entered the world of agriculture through different avenues: for Jimi, it was through a winery owned by his friends; for Kristen it was as a vegetable farmer in Sonoma. They both decided to leave the West Coast in search of a strong local food scene and affordable land – a new beginning. So they jumped into their camper van and headed east.

Such was the nature of their adventure – they didn't have a firm destination in mind. If the opportunity presented itself, they would have stopped in any state

they drove through to put up shop. But they drove onward, Jimi, Kristen, and Clyde, breaking up their days of driving monotony by wish-casting for what their future farm would look like.



Jimi Tutor and Kristen Klenow, the owners of Clyde Farm. CREDIT: SELT STAFF

Eventually the camper van reached the end of the contiguous 48, stopping in New Hampshire. Anchored by a friendship base and compelled by the landscape and tradition that made the Granite State an agricultural nirvana, the trio kicked off their farming vision quest by attaching themselves to already-established farms, learning, growing, and making a name for themselves.

“That was a really good place to start,” said Kristen. “I had been farming for a long time but never in this climate so I learned a lot in those first few years.”

As their expertise and experience grew, so did their needs for bigger and richer farmland. They began leasing farmland and while that was a rewarding – and fiscally necessary – option, the dreams of putting down roots and investing in the long-term required ownership.

“Owning land rather than leasing land opens up many more options,” says Jimi. “Planting orchards, or putting in grapevines – you would never invest in building something like that on leased land.”

That dream inched towards reality when SELT connected Jimi and Kristen to the Carlsen family in Farmington, who had operated a dairy farm for decades before winding it down thirty years ago. The fields sat unused, ready for its next caretakers – until 2019.

“Everett and Shirley Carlsen wanted to see the farm conserved and protected from development,” says Jeremy Lougee, SELT's Conservation Project Manager and Farmland Coordinator. “For them, it was important that it be passed on to the next generation of farmers.”

Through SELT, Jim and Kristen came to an agreement with the Carlsen family to lease their land, set up Clyde Farm with the end goal a purchase. SELT is currently working to place a conservation easement on the property, while Jimi and Kristen lease the farm until the easement is in place. Then, Jimi and Kristen will buy the property from the Carlsens at a value reflecting that the land is now conserved.

“We really found a good niche here,” Kristen says. “There really seems to be a need for local, organic produce. And now that we're going to own this place, we've planted a bunch of perennials. Apples, berries, tons of flowers I would have never been able to grow.”

“People ask us ‘How did you find this place?’” Jimi says. “This seems like such a match made in heaven. We just reached out to SELT like a lot of farmers do and daydreamed out loud to them, what we were looking for in an ideal farm property. And they let us know when there was something that could fit those parameters. Having SELT as the match-maker has allowed this deal to happen at ‘farmer speed’ rather than having to compete on the open market for property.”

*SELT is grateful for the patience and support of the Carlsen family as they explored options with SELT, and for the generosity of the William H. Donner Foundation, the NH Farm Future Fund, the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership, and Tri-City Subaru (see next page), all of whom are contributing to the conservation of Carlsen Farm.*

## Tri-City Subaru Shares the Love

As part of its annual Share the Love campaign, Tri-City Subaru in Somersworth has chosen SELT as one of the local nonprofit recipients, with proceeds directed to conserve Clyde Farm. Each year, Subaru of America, in conjunction with local Subaru dealerships, runs Share the Love, which offers customers the opportunity to designate a gift from Subaru to a selection of local and national nonprofit organizations. SELT is among this year's recipients.

"We have found that our customers actually wait for Share the Love to buy their cars," says Robert Arthur, Operations Manager at Tri-City Subaru.

How Share the Love works: upon delivery of their purchased or leased car, the customer chooses the organization (or organizations) they want the Subaru donations to go to (\$250 from Subaru of America, plus \$50 from Tri-City Subaru). And then in the spring of 2021, Tri-City will present the funds in the form of everyone's favorite donation conveyance: the big check.

For the Tri-City staff, choosing SELT and Clyde Farm was a slam-dunk, especially as it opens up the opportunity for future farm-centric volunteer activities. (Tri-City is a long-time friend of SELT and regularly sends volunteers to support SELT; they recently spent a day building kiosks for SELT properties.)



The Tri-City Subaru crew. CREDIT: SELT STAFF

"The staff love it," Robert says. "SELT's work fits well with the Subaru brand and the company's social values. Everyone here is excited that we can do something to help our community and support a local farm."

*Share the Love is running now through January 4. Learn more at [tricitysubaru.com/share-the-love.htm](http://tricitysubaru.com/share-the-love.htm).*

## SELTie Survey Says!

This spring we sent out our first ever SELTie Survey and we had some great responses. We wanted to share a few highlights with you (top responses shown):

### I feel most connected to SELT..

1. When SELT is protecting a place I know or care about.
2. When I recreate on SELT properties.

### It's important for SELT to protect land for...

1. **Wildlife habitat:** Wild animals and plants need undeveloped lands to survive.
2. **Clean water:** Undeveloped lands can be critical to protecting drinking water supplies.
3. **Recreation:** It is needed for public activities such as hiking, dog walking, hunting, birding, or snowshoeing.
4. **Food and farms:** We need to secure farms and agricultural lands for locally sourced foods.
5. **Quality of life:** I don't want to live in a highly populated area of New Hampshire.

### And a few Comments...

*"We are new members, so we are not that keyed in to all that SELT offers, but we have enjoyed exploring the properties. The SELT properties have been a godsend during the pandemic."*

*"I really appreciate SELT's vision of keeping trails open during the pandemic. Very important for people's mental health and also raised awareness of how important it is to conserve the land."*

*"Keep up the great work! Your land and educational activities are vital in this increasingly crowded, busy world! A quiet place is truly a precious gift."*

*Thank you for all your feedback! Read more survey results at [seltnh.org/seltiesurvey](http://seltnh.org/seltiesurvey).*

## Businesses Can Make a Big Impact with the CDFA Investment Tax Credit Program

Did you know? If you are a business owner and pay New Hampshire's Business Profits Tax (BPT), Business Enterprise Tax (BET), and/or Insurance Premium Tax, you have a unique chance to direct your taxes to support SELT's vision for the Center for People and Nature at Burley Farms.

That's because New Hampshire businesses can invest in community and economic development projects and receive a 75% state tax credit for that contribution through the Community Development Investment Program (CDIP), also known as the CDFA Investment Tax Credit Program. An investment is also eligible for treatment as a federal charitable contribution. Tax credits may be used at any time during a period of five successive years.

SELT has received \$450,000 in tax credits to help establish its Center for People and Nature at Burley Farms. SELT will need to sell a minimum of \$225,000 in tax credits between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021 and another \$225,000 in tax credits between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

*If you are interested in learning more, please contact Deputy Director Bev Shadley at 603-658-9752 or [bshadley@seltnh.org](mailto:bshadley@seltnh.org).*

## What is an OPAV?

The OPAV keeps the price of farms – conserved farms in particular – at a more accessible value for a farmer. At over 200 acres, Harmony Hill, while conserved, remains an expensive property. By adding the OPAV to the existing easement, the land becomes more affordable. And when it comes time to sell the farm, the OPAV gives preference to a family or other working farmers before other potential buyers. If a non-farmer is poised to acquire the farm, SELT has the option to step in and acquire the property under the same terms and price structure, with the intention of then seeking a farmer, providing a path for the land to remain a working farm.

In 2019, Carl Wallman committed to amending the existing conservation easements to include the OPAV language, and then agreed to donate the ownership of Harmony Hill Farms to SELT.

To make this possible, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests graciously agreed to assign all three conservation easements to SELT. SELT then worked with Carl (and his Trust) and the Town of Northwood to amend the conservation easements to include the OPAV. Once amended this December, Carl's Trust will donate the land to SELT. SELT will honor the original lease with Short Creek Farm, which provided Short Creek with a first right of refusal to acquire the house and land they were renting.

In early 2021, SELT will sell the majority of the farm to Short Creek for its appraised value. The proceeds from the sale will establish the "Wallman Farmland Legacy Fund." This Fund will support SELT's ability to reacquire the farmland – should at some point in the future Short Creek Farm decide to sell and no eligible farmer is interested in acquiring it. In the intervening time, SELT can use the Fund to support the conservation, affordability, and accessibility of other working farms in our region.

"It's an amazing and fitting legacy," says Brian Hart, SELT's Executive Director. "Like the cycle of life, Carl's gift has the potential to keep birthing and rebirthing farms."

## Neighbors Beyond the Hill continued from page 3



Carl and his excavator. COURTESY PHOTO

"Carl and that excavator!" Fran says, laughing. "It excited him to find new areas. I think you can trace it back to his childhood in Central Park, which was a refuge for him in Manhattan. Those giant rock faces, they inspired him."

For fifteen years, Carl revealed the glacially-deposited rock faces at Graylag, then erected Leopold benches all around the property for passersby to sit and contemplate the power and peace of the natural world and its hidden secrets. Whether he intended it or not, these were monuments to harmony and curiosity, to persistence and achievement, to the methodical revelation of the treasure that lay just underneath the surface.

The parallels to Carl's life are obvious – the son of an immigrant who fled persecution, a mild-mannered Manhattanite who came to New Hampshire with little more than a thirst for knowledge, and, underneath it all, an indomitable force of nature who impacted all within his orbit.

Dave Viola and Jeff Backer know this. Carl's values have made it possible for them to own their land, grow their operation, and carry the banner of New Hampshire farming and food production forward. Peter Lamb knows this, as he cradles the cribbage board his old friend Carl gave to him many years ago, made from the black gum trees of Graylag, "Reaching across our own stone walls," hewn into the amber wood.

And Fran Berman knows it, as she sat with Carl during those last few months, when cancer had laid claim to his body. Carl's hospice was spent in a hospital bed that was brought into his living room. From where he lay, he could see the fields of Graylag and the waters of Wild Goose Pond.

Carl died February 14, 2020, in his home, on land that bore the legacy of the generations that preceded him.

### Short Creek Farm

There is a wooden kiosk at the entrance to Harmony Hill. It contains some history of the property, a couple of maps, as well as information on the Northwood Area Land Management Collaborative.















If you were to stand motionless, and catch your breath, and if the breeze carries just right, the organic and mechanical sounds of an active and productive farm ripple from the distance.

And in that moment of stillness, your eyes will likely be drawn to another kiosk display. It is a poem – Robert Frost's *Mending Wall* – a favorite of Carl Wallman. You read the first three verses and understand why:

*Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
And spills the upper boulders in the sun.*

## Get Outside

Come get outside with us! Check out the events below and sign up at [seltnh.org/events](http://seltnh.org/events). Suggested donation is \$5 per person or \$10 per family. Please register early; our events fill quickly. Registration closes at noon the day before the event. Group sizes for field trips may be limited due to COVID-19. Read our COVID-19 Safety Policy at [seltnh.org/covid19](http://seltnh.org/covid19).

EVENT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	 
<b>Virtual Tree ID Workshop &amp; Self-Guided Tour</b>	A SELT winter classic, with a twist! Join foresters Phil Auger and Fred Borman for a virtual tree ID workshop to be followed by a self-guided tour.	 Self-Guided Tour location TBD	Fri., January 8 1 PM 
<b>White Pines Program – Guided Nature Walk</b>	Join White Pine Programs Educator and Naturalist Ryan Busby for an exploration of Stonehouse Forest. For adults and children over 10.	Stonehouse Forest, Barrington, NH	Sat., January 16 10 AM–Noon 
<b>Wolf Moon Walk</b> <i>FAMILY FRIENDLY</i>	Join Nature-Based Educator and SELT Volunteer Kim Cote for this family friendly event. Both walks will focus on the winter landscape at Burley Farms.	Burley Farms, Epping NH	Thurs., January 28 10 AM–Noon OR 3:30-5:30 PM Rain/snow date: January 29 
<b>Snowshoe Rattlesnake Mountain</b>	SELT Land Manager T. Parker Schuerman will be leading a winter adventure up Rattlesnake Mountain.	Birch Ridge Community Forest, New Durham, NH	Sat., February 13 9 AM–Noon 
<b>White Pines Program – Guided Nature Walk</b>	Join Ryan Busby for an exploration of Tucker & French Family Forest. This event is for adults and children over 10.	Tucker & French Family Forest, Kingston, NH	Sat., February 20 10 AM–Noon 
<b>SELT Book Club – <i>The God of Small Things</i> by Arundhati Roy</b>	With mesmerizing language Kerala, India becomes its own character in this Booker Prize winning novel. Our friends at Water Street Bookstore in Exeter will donate 20% of the proceeds from the purchase of <i>The God of Small Things</i> to SELT.		Thurs., February 25 5–6 PM
<b>Full Moon Snowshoe</b>	Natural Resource Steward Sue Mayotte will be leading a walk under the light of the full moon at the Burley Farms in Epping.	Burley Farms, Epping, NH	Sat., February 27 5:30–7:30 PM 
<b>Leighton Forest Snowshoe</b>	Join SELT Land Conservation Director Duane Hyde for a snowshoe walk around the beautiful Leighton Forest.	Strafford/ Barrington, NH	Sat., March 6 9–11 AM 
<b>White Pines Program – Guided Nature Walk</b>	Ryan Busby will lead an exploration of Burley Farms. This event is for adults and children over 10.	Burley Farms, Epping, NH	Sat., March 20 10 AM–Noon 
<b>Family Naturalist Series: Winter Twigs!</b>	SELT naturalists will guide your family as you explore an exciting new topic each season.		Sat., March 27 9–10:30 AM
<b>Signs of Spring</b> <i>FAMILY FRIENDLY</i>	Kim Cote will lead two walks to check out the signs of spring popping up around the Tucker & French Family Forest. This event is family friendly, and fun for all ages.	Tucker & French Family Forest, Kingston, NH	Weds., March 31 10 AM–Noon OR 3:30-5:30 PM Rain date: April 2 

 EASY  MODERATE  DIFFICULT

Generous support from the Center for Assessment makes these field trips possible. Learn more about our Get Outside sponsor at [nceia.org](http://nceia.org).



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### Questions, Comments, Concerns?

To contact SELT, please call **603-778-6088** or email [info@seltnh.org](mailto:info@seltnh.org).

6 Center St., PO Box 675, Exeter, NH 03833  
 Website: [seltnh.org](http://seltnh.org)

*SELT VIEWS* is published periodically and is the newsletter of the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire. Edited by Kylee Noga and Brian Hart.

*Printed on recycled paper.*

The Internal Revenue Service continues to recognize the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, Tax ID number 02-0355374. Contributions are tax-deductible.

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- ✓ LASTING STEWARDSHIP

## Neighbors Beyond the Hill

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## SELTie Survey Says!

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## Get Outside!

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## Community Rallies to Help Keep Merrymeeting Clean

**I**ncredible news! The Keep Merrymeeting Clean Matching Challenge successfully raised \$390,000 from more than 200 families – which was instantly doubled thanks to generous matching funds from several leadership donors.

The Keep Merrymeeting Clean initiative will help protect the Merrymeeting Lake watershed by permanently conserving nearly 500 acres at Mount Molly and adding 600+ acres to the Birch Ridge Community Forest.

Scheduled to be completed by late April 2021, the acquisition will ultimately lead to the preservation of expansive wildlife habitat, clean water protection, and new and existing trails for the public. Like the effort in 2018, the stars have aligned again to protect cherished lands surrounding Merrymeeting Lake.

“I’d like to offer a huge thanks to the Collins Family for generously agreeing to gift Mount Molly to SELT for the enjoyment of the public, to LCHIP for their closing grant, and the Merrymeeting Lake Association for again partnering with SELT to share this effort and encourage those who love Merrymeeting to contribute,” says Brian Hart, Executive Director of SELT. “What people achieved, together, will have an everlasting impact on the region.”

Learn more at [keepmerrymeetingclean.org](http://keepmerrymeetingclean.org).

## LCHIP Awards Three Grants to SELT

**I**n November, New Hampshire’s Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) awarded grants to support three SELT projects: **\$240,000** for the revitalization and preservation of the John Prescott Chase Farmhouse at Burley Farms (our first historic preservation grant!); **\$320,000** for the conservation of Leighton Forest, and **\$200,000** to expand the Birch Ridge Community Forest. The LCHIP award comes on the heels of a successful effort to raise \$390,000 in private funds for the Keep Merrymeeting Clean initiative.

Learn more at [seltnh.org/news](http://seltnh.org/news).

## Land Conservation by the numbers

