



## Trust annual meeting is April 21: casual format, important business

Given the popularity of last year's casual format, Joshua's Trust will hold its annual meeting this spring on Saturday, April 21 from 4-6 p.m. at the Beckish Senior Center in Columbia on Route 66.

The fun will start with a social half hour at 4 p.m. followed by awards and our speaker, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Julia Rogers, who supervises some of our interns, will address the question of millennials and their connection to the landscape and conservation.

Rogers volunteers with our mapping team, and is also a steward at Mason's Mill, and a member of the Mansfield Conservation Commission.

We will also vote on new and continuing Trustees. Up for re-election this year are Gail Bruhn and Nancy Silander. The Nominations and Governance Committee has also proposed the following new Trustees: Rob Beach, Mike Curtis

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Why is Julia Rogers, who supervises some of our JT interns, smiling? And why is she holding an axe? See story at right.

### Her mapping skills were a natural fit for Joshua's Trust

Sometimes, a small gesture will have great consequences.

If Julia Rogers hadn't happened to see the Joshua's Trust boundary marker, she wouldn't have Googled the Trust and come by to see if she could get involved.

She had some familiarity with land trusts, having volunteered in her native Pennsylvania with one, as well as in Maine where she went to college. Now, she was in Connecticut as a master's degree student in the Natural Resources Department at UConn, so it seemed a natural

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## Cooperation, collaboration, bring benefits

From its inception, Joshua's Trust has worked closely with the towns in which it preserves and stewards land and historical sites. Together with the towns' elected officials and commission and committee volunteers, the Trust and towns leverage resources to reach mutually beneficial acquisition and management goals to protect more land in our region.

The support takes different forms – financial, research, en-



The sign at the entrance of Coney Rock Preserve reflects collaboration at work.

couragement – depending on the particular need.

As an example, the town of Mansfield and the Trust have been working together for over 50 years. It was Mansfield's Historical Society and Conservation Commission that initiated the work resulting in the Trust's acquisition of the Gurleyville Grist Mill and Bradley-Buchanan Woods.

Several of Joshua's Trust's key properties connect with land owned

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## Joshua's Trust

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Office hours: Tues. Thurs. noon- 5 p.m.  
Phone: 860-429-9023

### OFFICERS:

President: Karen Zimmer  
Past President: Doug Hughes  
Vice President: Paul Pribula  
Secretary: Nancy Silander  
Treasurer: Gail Bruhn

### STAFF

Executive Director: Michael Hveem  
Finance Administrator: Joyce Fountain  
Volunteer Coordinator: Andy Woodcock

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Peter Andersen, Willington  
Robert Beach, Mansfield  
Gail Bruhn, Mansfield  
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Michael Curtis, Columbia  
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Nancy Silander, Mansfield  
Terry Wakeman, Ashford  
Karen Zimmer, Mansfield



Visit the Trust's Facebook page for news updates.



The accreditation seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

# Our marvelous antiquities

When you're hiking a trail, do you pause in wonder when you stumble upon an old cellar hole or the remnants of a mill? Did you know that most local waterways, even small ones, were altered with dams so that farmers and others could set up a mill to harness the power of falling water?

I learned that from a walk on our Utey Hill Preserve with steward Ann Dunnack.

Our historical crown jewel is the Gurleyville Grist Mill on the Fenton River, which reminds us what life was like two centuries ago.

This mill is important because stone grist mills are uncommon in New England. Here's what Theodore Penn, Researcher in Technology from Sturbridge Village wrote about it after visiting in 1979:

"The power system surviving in the Gurleyville Mill is so incredibly rare that this small building tucked into your quiet community truly has national significance."

In late fall, structural engineers studied the condition of the Grist Mill

and have made recommendations for remediation of several problems that have compromised its structural integrity and must be corrected.

The total project will take several years and probably exceed \$100,000.

We pledge to care for our properties forever! A plan to continue monitoring the mill will be implemented once renovations are completed.

The fact that the late Gov. Wilbur Cross grew up across the road from this mill when his family owned it adds to its historical significance.

In his autobiography, Cross wrote that in 1862 he was born in the miller's cottage...

"There I opened my eyes on the old stone mill with its large wooden water wheel, on

the up-and-down saw which made boards out of logs and on the stages of converting corn on the cob into meal or buckwheat into flour."

Come visit this serene location anytime, and marvel at the antiquities within when it's open this summer.

— Karen

### TRUST NOTES



By Karen Zimmer  
Joshua's Trust President



Visitors poke around inside the Grist Mill on opening day, 2016.

## Welcome two new business sponsors!

Two local companies have become sponsors for 2018. Thank you!

Businesses and community organizations of all kinds are invited to become Joshua's Trust sponsors. We are seeking organizations who would like to partner with our efforts to build a better and more sustainable

community here in eastern Connecticut.

Sponsorship levels are: American Chestnut Sponsor - \$5,000; White Cedar Sponsor - \$2,000; Hickory Sponsor - \$1,000; Sugar Maple Sponsor - \$500, and White Pine Sponsor - \$250.

American Chestnut Sponsor

The National Institute for the Clinical Application  
of Behavioral Medicine  
Ruth Buczynski

White Pine Sponsor

Reservoir Financial, Mansfield  
Liz Charron

For more information on becoming a community sponsor or enrolling in the Great Oak program, please contact Trust Executive Director Michael Hveem or Development Chair David Parry at [dfparry01@gmail.com](mailto:dfparry01@gmail.com).

## Talk the (orchid) talk, walk the walk, hear the birds sing

*Wow – even if it doesn't feel much like it, meteorological spring is about to spring – and if you aren't already, you will likely soon be looking forward to getting back to the out-of-doors after all our cold and snow. Here are some great opportunities!*

### Wednesday, March 21 Orchids, talk the talk

Join popular naturalist Deb Field for an in-depth look at two common flowers: the Pink Lady Slipper and the Downy Rattlesnake Plantain Orchid, which can be observed as you hike through our local forests. Field spent the 2017 growing season studying the distribution of these plants on a local Joshua's Trust property (Hubbard Sanctuary) as part of her CTDEEP Master Naturalist certification. This spring she will lead a series of five wildflower walks on the property beginning the end of March. Her talk will be indoors at the Chaplin Library (Rt. 198 and Chaplin Street), beginning at 6:30 p.m.



Pink Lady Slipper

### Saturday, March 31 Orchids, walk the walk

Deb Field will lead the first of a series of five walks, all at Hubbard Sanctuary, to look for spring flowers – each walk should offer different species. No need to sign up or to go on all of them. The walks – moderate in difficulty – begin at 9:30 a.m., and last about an hour and a half. There are no rain dates. The other dates are: **April 14, April 28, May 12 and May 26.** Children older than 12 are welcome. Please, no dogs.

### Sunday, April 29 May pole dance

The May Pole returns on **Sun., April 29.** Come to the

Atwood Farm 2-4 p.m. for an old-fashioned May Pole dance, with music by the Mansfield Middle School fiddlers, led by Lindsey Clark. We'll also make May baskets and wind socks. The outbuildings will also be open. Come see the barn displays, the carriage house, and the weaver's cottage; or take a look into the hen house, ice house and pig house.

### Saturday, May 5 Song bird watching

Birdwatchers can gather on **Sat., May 5**, 8 a.m., at Pigeon Swamp in Windham, to go out with Mike Curtis and Dave Parry. These two leaders are passionate and knowledgeable about songbirds and where to see them. Please, no dogs! Sign up at [activities@joshuastrust.org](mailto:activities@joshuastrust.org).

### Saturday, May 19 Walk Pigeon Swamp

Want to learn more about the natural environment at Pigeon Swamp? Join Deb Russel as we explore the forest community. This is a moderate, 2-mile hike; dogs are welcome as well as children older than 10.

### Saturday, May 26 Build a fairy house

From 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., in cooperation with the Mansfield Library, youngsters will have an opportunity to build fairy houses at the Bradley-Buchanan Woods (next to the library on Route 89). We will have many of the construction materials needed, but feel free to bring your own.

We particularly encourage younger architects to imagine and construct what fairies and other woodland creatures might enjoy.

*Please check the web site for other walks in April and May.*



Kenneth Noll as Charles Darwin.

## Darwin stops in for a cup of tea

Joshua's Trust volunteers got a glimpse into the domestic life of one of the most influential names in science when Charles Darwin showed up at the Atwood Farm for a cucumber sandwich and a cup of tea.

The originator of evolutionary theory was the main attraction when the Trust threw an afternoon party to thank volunteers for their faithful service. Darwin appeared at Trust headquarters in the person of Kenneth Noll, a University of Connecticut microbiology professor who looked and acted the part of the famous naturalist.

Darwin didn't come to the gathering to talk about evolution, however. Rather, he came to tell what life was like for him and his family in Downe, England, during the Victorian Era. Among other details the Trust volunteers learned: The reclusive naturalist – a man of immense wealth but frail health – was fascinated by earthworms. He also played a nightly game of backgammon with his wife and first cousin, Emma.

# A new slate of Trustees stepping up to help

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and Terry Wakeman.

If you are interested in being a Trustee, contact Betsy Paterson, chair of the committee, for more information.

Trustees now serve three-year terms, for a maximum of nine years. If a Trustee wishes to continue, he or she must wait another six years before becoming eligible.

So, come socialize with your fellow Trust members, discover what has been accomplished this past year, vote on your Trustees, and enjoy a respite from spring gardening. There is no charge – although donations are always appreciated!

## TRUSTEE SLATE - FIRST TERM

(Please note that two Trustees are filling out terms):

**Rob Beach** (Mansfield) (First term ends 2021) – Rob has been a steward at Whetten Woods for the past four years, and a Regional Coordinator for two. He is also a member of the Roving Stewardship Crew. He is semi-retired from the State of Connecticut Appellate Court and was a Superior Court judge before that. Rob lives with his wife, Susan, who also volunteers for the Trust.

**Mike Curtis** (Columbia) (First term ends 2020) – Mike serves on the Development Committee, and has led several bird walks for the Trust, as he is an avid birder. He is also on the Gurleyville Grist Mill Task Force and is using his ties to UConn for real-life projects for future engineers. He is currently an independent engineering consultant.



**Paul Pribula** (Ashford) (First term ends 2021) - Paul has become the Trust's mapping expert. During his working career, he developed a lot of IT knowledge, and has put his expertise to use for the Trust. He is also working on evaluating the Trust's risk management. He is currently Vice-President, replacing Betsy Paterson who resigned this position.

**Terry Wakeman** (Ashford) (First term ends 2020) – As a member of the Roving Stewardship Crew, Terry has worked at Rankin, the Grist Mill, Friedman Forest (where he is a steward), Hastings (also a steward), and Mason's Mill. His carpentry skills are also much in demand when trails need bridges, or when a spot needs a picnic table, as was the case at the Atwood Farm. Terry is currently working with a couple of other Trustees evaluating the Trust's risk management.

## TRUSTEE SLATE: Re-election

**Gail Bruhn** (Mansfield) (Second term ends 2021) – Gail became a Trustee three years ago. Her expertise in finance has been an asset and she is now treasurer and head of the Finance Committee.

**Nancy Silander** (Mansfield) (Third term ends 2021) – Nancy has been a member of the Trust for over 35 years. She chairs the Education and Outreach Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee and is currently secretary for the Trust.

# An environmentalist – and she can handle an axe

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to her, as an environmentalist, to look up the local land trust.

Since some of her expertise is in GIS and mapping, it was clear where her skills were most wanted. For the past year, she has been working with other mappers, analyzing our regional landscapes, and updating trail maps for the website.

She also stepped in and took over the stewardship of Mason's Mill on the Fenton River in Mansfield. Although one of our smaller properties, it is historically important, and with the help of the Sue and Rob Beach and volunteers from EASTCONN, she cleaned it up and inspired several of our woodworkers to build a picnic table for the site.

Julia's family has also been important in focusing her interests on environmental concerns. She went along on the

Christmas bird counts with her grandparents, and was backpacking by age 8 with her father.

At Colby College, she joined the woodsmen team – lumberjacks who compete regionally. She will be participating at UConn when they host a collegiate and semi-professional event.

Competitions in axe-throwing, wood splitting, wood chopping, and pole climbing are some of the activities.

As well as volunteering ten hours a week at the Trust, Julia is a new member of Mansfield's Conservation Commission, which gives her exposure to the government side of conservation and environmental protection.

However, her dream is to work at a land trust working to conserve and steward land in partnership with the local community, as she feels those who volunteer with land trusts are motivated and proactive when it comes to land conservation.



**Julia Rogers in mapping mode.**

## One good intern deserves another, and another, and...

*By Michael Hveem, Executive Director*

Some of you may have noticed in recent newsletter articles about our student volunteers from UConn, Eastern Connecticut State University, EASTCONN and E.O. Smith High School. And now we have an exciting new development!

We have entered into a formal internship and Work Study program with UConn, in which students earn academic credit or receive federal financial aid while performing work to advance the mission of Joshua's Trust.

We provide a hands-on laboratory for students to gain important practical work knowledge, while the Trust benefits from access to the latest academic thinking on everything from property mapping to conducting natural species inventories to updating the property management plans.

Because of this enhanced relationship with the University of Connecticut, which encourages students to do credit-worthy internships in the community, we have five of these undergraduates this spring involved in various areas of the Trust.

One of our most pressing needs is up-dating our technology as well as in continuation of the mapping of our properties.

One intern is working with our webmaster to enhance our web site, another is working on a marketing plan for the Grist Mill, another is determining how to get and keep the

Trust up-to-date in social media sites, and another is working on the mapping with UConn graduate student Julia Rogers.

All of the students are supervised by Trust volunteers as well as by Mike Hveem, our executive director.

This semester we also added doctoral degree candidates. They, along with their advisor, are creating a

management plan and decision-making tool to assist us with our Whetten Woods property, where we increasingly need to balance habitat protection with recreational access.

The interns' professors are able to see first hand how their teaching of theory and technical tools is translated by their students into practical outcomes.

So, be on the lookout for a revamped website that will be easier to negotiate and easier to read on mobile devices, as well as for links to the Trust in other media, and for news about Whetten Woods and the Grist Mill.

Expect to see future reports on our progress and our accomplishments, and if you see UConn students on our properties, please join me in thanking them!



Mapping intern Conner Dickes.

## The Trust's cooperative programs take many forms

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by the Town of Mansfield.

Coney Rock Preserve is a case study in collaboration. This was a 10-year effort that preserved four properties through cooperative work with land owners, cost-sharing, and benefit-sharing. Mansfield purchased a property having the best access to the Trust's property, and in return the Trust obtained a trail license to the lookout on an adjacent property, which helped the Town win a grant for the purchase. Communication (and patience) were essential for

the successful preservation of this 160-acre parcel.

Of course, individuals and personnel change – both at the town level and at the Trust, so relationships must be renewed and reviewed. This is one of the goals of the Strategic Plan adopted by the Trust in July, 2017, under the Land Conservation Plan.

Trustees will soon be contacting people in each of our towns to review and renew associations, and to ensure that we are indeed working together and not at cross purposes. for the benefit and wellbeing of present and future generations.

## Grant Meitzler, 74, had a special love of the Grist Mill

Grant Meitzler, 74, who died on January 24, was a volunteer for many years for the Trust. His particular passion was the Gurleyville Grist Mill.

Once the Trust acquired the mill in 1979, Meitzler worked tirelessly to ensure that it was appropriately preserved – adapting the mill for visitors, interpreting as a docent how the mill functioned, and working behind the scenes to be sure the mill would show at its best at the events held to pay off the mortgage.

More recently, he photographed the interior and exterior walls of the mill before the new bridge was constructed, an invaluable resource for the current restoration efforts.

Meitzler was the assistant town engineer for the town of Mansfield for over 40 years.

He also served for many years as a member of the Mansfield Conservation Commission.

He requested that donations in his memory be given to Joshua's Trust.

# Headed outdoors for a picnic or hike? Think of us.

Spring can bring new motivation to get back outdoors, and when you do, please think of Joshua's Trust and its ongoing mission to protect open spaces. As always, the Trust's continued success depends on the support of its community. All contributions include membership and are tax deductible.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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\$20 Friend; \$35 Supporter; \$100 Caretaker; \$250 Patron; \$500 Preservationist; \$1,000 Conservationist; \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other)

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